

P. Thorne

THE
MILESIA N CHIEF.

A Romance.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF MONTORIO,

AND

THE WILD IRISH BOY.

C. R. Martin

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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DEDICATION.

TO THE QUARTERLY REVIEWERS.

GENTLEMEN,

You have been pleased to notice the Romance of "MONTORIO," and I am grateful for the notice. This is my motive for dedicating the following pages to you.

In so doing we are perfectly *quit*. It is obviously the purpose of modern

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Reviewers to give you not the slightest idea of the work they profess to notice, but their own sentiments: they merely assume the *title* of the *work* as a motto for a political, theological, or belle-lettre Essay, (as the case may be), and then—
“They write—good Gods! how they do write!”

The present Dedication shall *en suite* be entirely devoted to talking of myself.

I have written two Romances. The first I cannot help thinking exhibits some power of imagination and description, but unfortunately they are exhausted on a subject so much beyond

the reach of life, or the tone and compass of ordinary feeling, that I might as well have given a map of *terra incognita*, and expected the reader to swear to its boundaries, or live on its productions.

Solicitous about the public feeling (as all who write must be), I consulted the Reviewers: and what did they tell me?—that they were profound judges, but would pronounce no decision; that they were consummate critics, but would give no advice.

Seriously I read the Reviews for information, and information I could get none—about myself. All I learned was

that I was a bad writer, but why, or how, or in what manner I was to become better, they graciously left to myself.

These men abuse the public much ; that some of them possess talent is undoubted ; but why not exercise it in their *own right*, without borrowing a pretext from an office they do not discharge ? Why not become *writers, instead of seditious* Reviewers.

If I possess any talent, it is that of darkening the gloomy, and of deepening the sad ; of painting life in extremes, and representing those struggles of passion when the soul trembles on the

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verge of the unlawful and the unhal-
lowed.

In the following pages I have tried to apply these powers to the scenes of actual life : and I have chosen my own country for the scene, because I believe it the only country on earth, where, from the strange existing opposition of religion, politics, and manners, the extremes of refinement and barbarism are united, and the most wild and incredible situations of romantic story are hourly passing before modern eyes.

In my first work I attempted to explore the ground forbidden to man ; the sources of visionary terror ; the " formless and the void : " in my present I have

tried the equally obscure recesses of
the human heart. If I fail in both, I
shall—write again.

I am, Gentlemen,

With more respect for your talents, than
gratitude for your information,
&c. &c.

THE AUTHOR OF MONTORIO.

Dublin, Dec. 12th, 1811.

THE MILESIAN.

CHAP. I.

Wise wretch, with too much learning to be taught,
With too much thinking to have common thought,
You purchase pain with all that joy can give,
And die of nothing, but a rage to live.

POPE.

IN the winter of ———, the royal family of Naples were driven to seek for refuge in their Sicilian dominions. The preceding autumn had been marked by uncommon splendour and gaiety. The approaching darkness of the political horizon seemed to have no effect on the spirits of a dissipated court, except to contrast their strange and inauspicious brilliancy. But of all the fêtes given at that period,

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that of Lord Montclare, an English nobleman, lately arrived at Naples, was the most distinguished. His villa, at a little distance from the city, commanded the most exquisite scenery of the bay: every recess of the apartments displayed *chef-d'œuvres* of ancient art and modern luxury; yet the splendid crowd gazed carelessly on all these wonders. His daughter had not yet appeared.

This young female had been seen but once since her arrival in Naples; but report had already represented her as uniting in her mind and form the charms of all the muses and all the graces. She had appeared one night at the English ambassador's; but some accident had prevented the exhibition of her talents; when, after much importunity, she consented to sing: the indisposition of the principal accompaniment compelled her, after a few bars, suddenly to stop. A circle of literati then collected round her, and she was beginning to converse,

when the entrance of one of the royal family, who was passionately fond of dancing, put an end to conversation. She then stood up to dance, but had hardly joined the set, when her father, who was in the balcony conversing with a monk, suddenly fainting; she hurried away to attend him, and was seen no more: yet this imperfect display of her powers, the few words she had uttered, the few notes she had sung, and her figure, as it hovered on the verge of the dance half-ready for flight, had left such an impression, that all who could procure admission crowded to Lord Montclare's villa that night, in hopes of seeing her again.

Till she appeared every one was employed in making or answering inquiries about her and her father. Of Lord Montclare little was known, but that he was an English peer who had resided many years in Italy, married an Italian of

rank, and was now a widower with an only daughter.

It was said that since the death of his wife he had been immersed in melancholy. He perpetually changed his residence: he was pursued every where by a monk, whose presence sometimes produced the most terrible effects on him, and that no object appeared to excite him but the cultivation of his daughter's talents, whom he had surrounded from infancy with the first masters, and in whose education he had required them to combine every thing brilliant, seductive, and commanding:—to make her sing like a muse, dance like a grace, compose like a Sappho, and declaim like an Aspasia.

At this moment Lord Montclare himself appeared, conversing with the very monk, and an English officer whom he had recognized as his nephew, and led him into another apartment to introduce him to his daughter.

The monk joined a group of Italians who were speaking of their host, and expressing their surprise that with such a daughter Lord Montclare could ever be the victim of that dejection his features betrayed.

"Splendid talents," said the monk, "often cause more uneasiness than triumph : she has too much genius, perhaps too much pride, to be happy : her talents and her sensibility have been refined till neither her own excellence or the applauses of others afford her any further pleasure."

The Italians inquired if her talents were really so various and powerful as they were reported.

"Yes," said the monk, "her talents are real, but her character is artificial. Nature intended her for a superior being, a genius ; but pride, flattery, and an ambitious education, have made her mere woman. There she stands," he continued, suddenly pointing to the music-room, which was just thrown open, and

every eye instantly followed the direction of his hand.

A young female, whose exquisite figure seemed to exceed the maturity of her years, which could hardly be eighteen, was leaning on an instrument in the music-room. The blazing orchestra in which she stood strongly contrasted and defined her light but marked figure, the simplicity of her white dress, and dark folded hair, and the marble paleness and contour of her face: she was reading some music which a composer had just presented to her; and the transient gleams of expression, and the imperfect movements of pleasure, that played like beautiful coruscations over her face and figure, as the passages she read struck or pleased her, developed resources in her figure such as could not be imagined from a first view of it. Her attitude and appearance were simple, yet there was a prophetic repose in her dark eyes when she raised them, and a kind of

proud consciousness, mixed with indolence and melancholy in her looks, that verified the character given her by the monk.

Shortly after she turned to speak to the English officer, whom her father introduced as her kinsman, and the Italians for the first time heard the music of her voice.

The Englishman addressed some common-place flattery to her, such as he thought would please a vain, pedantic female; but the hauteur which she suddenly assumed disconcerted him, and he was silent.

She bowed to him with something of female insolence in her air, and then glancing at her dress, hastened from the room.

"And does she always appear with this careless simplicity?" said the Italians, surprised at the light and girlish figure they had beheld.

"Frequently," said the monk; "often at an assembly where her father wishes

her to appear, she enters habited as you saw her to-night, whilst the arrangement of her light drapery, the placing of an antique ornament, the very manner in which she folds her long hair, gives so exquisite a resemblance of some classical model, that she draws every eye from the sparkling signoras around her."

Two of the company, who had seen her at Rome, now joined them, and confirmed the monk's observations.

"I was at a musical assembly," said one of them, "where Armida was expected, and we all waited anxiously for her appearance: she entered late, resisted all importunity to sing, and at length ascended the orchestra with a mixture of timidity and negligence that confounded the spectators. She sung the first part of the air *Solto Voce*, and kept the hearers in a state between surprise and distrust, till almost at the close she uttered a few notes with so piercing, so potent an expression, that the susceptible shivered and

wept, and the judges felt she was mistress of all the wonders of her art."

"Often," said the other, "at an assembly where the best literary characters were assembled to meet her, Armida has remained silent and absent till almost forgotten, when a single remark, an allusion, an illustration that appeared to escape from her lips almost unconsciously, penetrated at once into the depth of the subject of which the rest had only been hovering on the surface; and while the room echoed with praise, she appeared to retreat from those praises as if they were bestowed on exertions far inferior to what she was capable of, whilst her bending head, her silent deprecation, the retiring consciousness of her whole figure, spoke more pride than the most ostentatious avidity of praise."

"Such is her character," said the monk. "Though her mother was an Italian, she was born in England, and afterwards educated here; and this accounts

for the mixture of English pride and Italian indolence that her character exhibits, combined with a voluptuous melancholy, the result of both climate and education."

The apartments were now full: the company, to avoid the intense heat, had many of them retired to a balcony that admitted the sea breeze. The English officer was standing apart, when a curtain, suddenly raised, discovered a scene of such beauty, that every one felt Armida was the artist.

It was a small apartment, which her paintings had converted into a kind of theatre, and to which they had given a range of view and a depth of perspective that delighted even the scientific Italians. It represented the garden of an oriental palace: the sides filled with flowers, whose lofty and luxuriant clusters seemed to rise above the height of the apartment, and whose deep and sunny hues were softened by the magic diffusion

of the lights ; and the perspective, terminated in an arch, beyond which was caught a view of the ruins of Persepolis. Charactered with all the spectral grandeur, the prostrate dignity of antiquity, they presented that mixture of deviation and decay that combines our admiration of greatness with our interest in debility. The daring and gigantic style of the ruins seemed to realize the idea of the modern Persians, that the "palace of forty pillars" is the work of super-human hands, and the haunt of the spirits of former ages.

The sculptures and relics were touched with a legendary truth that proved an equal knowledge of history and design ; but the luxury of colouring, the picturesque associations, and the fairy touches of invention, made the artist every where felt through the work. The perspective, prolonged through a range of pillars and arches, of fragments and foliage, was flushed with that rich

and lovely light that displayed the powers of the most inspired imagination embodying the glories of the most resplendent climate.

Armida advanced on the stage alone: she was in the oriental dress, and she had an instrument in her hand resembling the lute. Wandesford gazed with astonishment: the pale, slight, simply clad girl he had lately seen was transformed into the most brilliant female in the world. The colour which applause brought to her cheek mantled richly through the tinge of rouge she had put on to conceal the effects of her exertions.

She appeared as the oriental muse, and recited a poem she had translated from the Persian, sometimes accompanying herself on the instrument in her hand.

The Scavans could easily discover how much the poem was indebted to the translator; and the resources she displayed filled them with astonishment. The mythology and antiquities of the east were

touchèd on, or spared, with that familiarity which implies volumes; and the wonders of eastern fable were decorated with all the melodious pomp of Italian modulation: but the critics remarked that she dwelt much on description and little on passion, and seemed fonder of displaying the powers that dazzle the imagination than those that touch and enchain the heart: but all power of criticism was forgot, when, at the close of the poem, she burst into a song of triumph to congratulate the victory of her hero. She hung her lute on one of the pillars of the scene, and, accompanied by a band concealed behind it, gave herself up to the display of those amazing vocal powers which she had suppressed during the recitation. The torrent of sound that she now poured forth, the height to which she soared, the rapidity with which she traversed intervals that connected the widest extremes of human voice, the precision with which she

marked their minutest subdivisions, and, above all, the ease of attitude and expression which she preserved amid her exertions, like a skilful charioteer, who commands and enjoys the flight of his coursers, whilst their speed terrifies the spectators, filled the Italians with a sensation which applause could neither express or exhaust.

Armida retired amid these applauses overcome with fatigue and emotion, but still preserving a proud triumph of expression through her faltering steps and exhausted frame.

Amid the tumult of delight Wandesford alone remained silent. The first impression that he felt was that he had witnessed a piece of mechanism: the music, the paintings, the graces of motion, and the radiations of genius he had witnessed, seemed the result of a deception practised on his senses; a kind of intellectual *fata morgana*, which he determined to watch and detect the first

opportunity : but his resolution was defeated in a moment by the appearance of Armida, who was discovered, as the curtain again was unfolded, in the costume of the Grecian muse.

The local scenery was taken from Athens, and the parthenon and the temple of the winds were sketched in the perspective with the boldness of a master, and the graphic precision of an historian. Among the picturesque and indefinite touches of the scenery the Italians observed almost every ruin of classic celebrity, the pediments, the entablatures, the urns that formed the ornament of their cabinets, and the study of their antiquaries.

The antique truth of the pictures, the mellow light that was artfully effused over them, the severity of the architecture, and the chaster brilliancy of the climate, were a refreshing contrast to the luxuriant colours and lavish magnificence of the oriental landscape ; and the per-

fect and regular beauty of Armida was more visible amid the scene that surrounded her, and in the white, simple, statue-like, drapery she wore. She made a few remarks on the ancient drama, on their powers of expressing passions by attitude, and she alluded to some classical passages which describe a long and varied narrative, represented by the gestures of a single performer. The novelty of hearing the laws of the Greek drama discussed by a girl of eighteen with the elocution and grace of an Aspasia was forgot even by Wandesford, as he gazed on her beautiful figure, whose attitudes, like the chords of an instrument, seemed susceptible of every modulation that the endless varieties of passion can give or require. The Italians were delighted to behold those models of grace and expression which had so long been confined to painting and marble revived in the figure before them, with all the animation of life, and the magic graces of motion;

and they were amazed at the facility with which she passed from the rigid and breathless calm of a vestal to the luxurious frenzy of a bacchante. But she had reserved all her strength for the last exertion, in which she represented the story of Niobe. The spectators felt the very wounds, of which each seemed to pierce her through : they looked to every variation of the action as a respite from their sensations, yet each was more painful than the preceding. But when the last blow was aimed, when her dark, speaking eye was fixed, as if by fascination, on the winged death that approached, when shrinking into herself she seemed trying to hide her last child within her very vitals, when with short and hopeless catchings she spread to more than its utmost extent the vain defence of her robe, and the rigid agony of her limbs almost shewed the beginning encroachments of the stone upon the principles of life, a convulsive shudder pervaded the whole

assembly, nor was it till after some moments that it was perceived she had fainted from her exertions. In the confusion that followed, Wandesford tried to recover himself. Cold, selfish, unprincipled, and unfeeling, he had never suffered so much disturbance either from pleasure or pain before. The first sight of Armida had banished his usual indifference to female beauty: with the first sentence she uttered had ceased his usual contempt for female understanding. As her astonishing talents were developed, he expected to see some vanity, some female art, or weakness developed along with them, that would console him for the superiority he was compelled to acknowledge. He could discover none. Yet amid her most brilliant moments there appeared a melancholy, an abstraction, a gloom of mortality, which, united with her beauty and extreme youth, made her the most interesting creature he had ever beheld. Almost every one had now quitted the

apartment, eager for new pleasures; the monk alone remained, and seemed to be observing him closely. He determined to profit by this man's familiarity, and addressed him with the politeness he could at times assume: "Charming as your fair pupil is, she must have had many admirers." The monk assented.

"And has she as yet declared no preference?" said Wandesford.

"She has as yet felt no preference," said the monk.

"What then can be the cause of that melancholy that I perceive every moment hovering like a cloud over the brightness of her talents?"

"The very circumstances I have mentioned," said the monk. "Armida has never loved, and the energies of her heart are too powerful to be wasted even upon acquirements as splendid as her's; yet she does not suspect the real state of her mind; she imputes her lassitude to declining health, or to increasing sensibility,

without imagining or wishing for other sources of happiness."

He turned away from the monk. The company, invited by the moonlight beauty of the gardens, wandered through them in groups, and he joined them: every where he heard the praises of Armida, but no where could he see her. He wandered into the remoter parts of the garden: it was midnight: he stood on the bank of a canal shaded by orange-trees; all above was brightness, all around was fragrance, all below was calm—even Wandesford was touched: he thought of Armida almost with the delicacy of passion. At that moment the sound of a harp issued from the bowery clusters of an Arabian jessamine beside him. He turned, and saw Armida seated alone in a recess formed by its rich and odorous flowers: her attitude was that of fatigue and melancholy, yet from time to time she touched her harp with an impulse that seemed to echo some

musical tones that floated in her fancy. Her dress was changed again, and though negligent, it had a dramatic air that seemed the effect of study. Wandesford paused. It seemed so fair a vision, that he felt as if his approach would dissolve it; yet when he saw the exquisite grace of her attitude, and that she did not move at his approach, he thought it looked like art, and he said to himself, "She is a mere woman: she flies from crowds, because she thinks solitude more becoming: she is a mere woman: this is vanity, not enthusiasm." But as he attempted to speak, the consciousness of her talents gave him embarrassment, and he only expressed a fear that she was exhausted by her exertions.

"They have been overpaid," said she, bowing coldly.

As he drew nearer, and saw the hectic spot that burned on her cheek, while all the rest was paler than the flowers that almost touched it, he felt something like

real emotion, and he repeated his fear that such exertions were too much for her.

“ I feel they are,” said Armida, calmly; “ I feel they will perhaps be fatal to me; I almost wish they may.” She paused, and looked up to the sparkling sky that seemed tremulous with the light of ten thousand stars: “ I wish to pour my last breath into a strain of music, and waken to the harmony which those bright worlds make to the ears of spirits—to pass to heaven from those scenes which this earth resemble heaven.”

“ Talk not of dying to go to heaven,” said Wandesford, with profane gallantry, “ for where you are must be heaven.”

Armida seemed disconcerted at his warmth, and still more that she had been answered with common-place flattery. “ Here,” said Armida, “ I wished to represent the difference between the eastern and western muse: I brought my harp, and intended to have sung to it a

poem of Ossian's I had translated amid scenery that would have recalled the sombrous imagery and luxurious melancholy of the bard, but I felt myself incapable of further exertion." She continued to speak of Ossian, and her figure, and the motion of her white arms, that involuntarily touched her harp, seemed to realize the visions of the "soul of song." She knew not that she was addressing a man who had never read Ossian in his life, and the whole of whose poetical reading had been confined to political satires and bagatelles of the day.

But though Wandesford was insensible to her genius, he was entranced by her beauty, heightened as it was by the scenery, the perfumed air, by an expression of languid consciousness, and by her rich seductive accents that rose like music on the night. His vanity too mistook the constraint which she laid on her natural indolence to converse with a stranger and her kinsman for something of a stronger

interest, and he suddenly poured out his feelings with a warmth which even surprised himself, and with an energy of expression that left Armida no power of mistaking it for that general admiration to which she was accustomed.

"Let us join the company, signor," said she, calmly, but decisively, withdrawing the hand which he had seized; "we have remained here too long."

"Yes," said Wandesford, rising proudly (for he had knelt), "yes, I feel I have remained here too long, yet I feel the impressions I have received here will remain for ever: you are impatient to join the company; you live but for crowds and for their clamours. Pardon me, beautiful Armida," he continued, "provoked to speak with force, pardon me if I wonder how such depravity of taste can be united with such perfection of talents."

"If my taste is depraved," said Armida, calmly, "I am not to blame, but

those who educated me: if they have taught me false pleasures and a false ambition, let me retain them. Perhaps if you knew the lassitude, the gloom that succeed the most triumphant moments of my existence, you would not envy the few I enjoy. The refinement which has been the result of my acquirements has deprived me of their enjoyment, and I am like the bird, who, when he has filled his nest with perfumes, consumes himself with them and dies."

Wandesford was touched by this confession; but again the selfishness of his heart returned, and he believed it only another wile of seduction—the art of an all-endowed deceiver, who could combine the colours of manner as skilfully as those of painting, and pass in a moment, for effect's sake, from the glare of talent to the soft shade of sentiment. Yet while he determined to resist her spells, he found their influence more irresistible every moment, and he delighted

to gaze and to listen, while he believed every attitude the result of study, and every word the dictate of art ; but he was deceived by himself. Armida, always too proud for concealment, and too conscious of great ideas to hide them, uttered merely what she felt in one of those gloomy moments which she owed to the very excess of her talents, the companionless and magnificent solitude of her mind.

“ I am wretched,” she continued, “ except in the tumultuous illusions of a crowd that make me forget myself, or those moments of lonely enthusiasm that make me forget the world.” She attempted to quit him as she spoke, but Wandesford, whose feelings were ungo-vernable, again threw himself at her feet with the most rapturous expressions of passion, while pride, and even resentment, visibly struggled through his reluctant homage.

“ Armida, angel, siren, sorceress ! unequalled in brilliancy, unresisted in me-

lancholy, you are all enchantment, all inebriation—I yield to you. Command my heart, my fortune, my hand: fly not from me: you shall not fly, my homage is worthy of your pride. By the loveliest woman in England I have never been thus subdued: to the proudest woman I have never knelt thus. Is a conquest which your whole sex could never achieve unworthy of you?"

"You distress me, signor," said Armida, retreating and bending over her harp: "I am grateful for your sentiments; but pardon me if I discover a difference in our characters that forces me to believe you have mistaken mine, or are deceived in the passion you think it has inspired. Go to the lovely women of your own country, they will be proud of their conquest: go and leave the weak enthusiastic Italian to her harp and her paintings, her morbid sensibility, her luxurious melancholy. If there are sources of enjoyment more dear, more

exquisite, let me not know them; my pride tells me it would be too late, and my heart tells me it would be in vain."

"Insensible, bewildering, yet most infatuating creature, how do you contrive to charm by offending, and to make your very faults the means of fascination? What shall I think of the power you have obtained over me; what shall I think of you."

"Think me what I am—a woman fond of the luxuries of mind, fond of them to madness, till their excess has destroyed the sensibility they were intended to refine; one, who, alternately under the influence of ambition and of enthusiasm, flies to crowds for applause, and to solitude from melancholy, yet finds in both that disappointment, that apathy, that chasm of the soul, which life is unable to supply."

At this moment, the company, who had been seeking Armida, approached. Pride assisted Wandesford to conceal his emo-

tion, and Armida had none to conceal: he was mortified to leave her the next moment conversing with the Italians, with that mixture of ease and abstraction that marked her manner.

Refreshments were dispersed through the gardens in recesses half concealed by flowers, and shaded with the foliage of trees, that seemed to shed their fruits on the tables, and mingle their fragrance with the rich wines that sparkled on them.

Armida and a select party, principally musical, partook of ices and fruits on the bank of the canal, whose breezes were the sweetest luxury of the night: it was here she felt herself, and was resolved to make all around feel her resistless.

The moonlight in which she sat seemed to shed its own character on her form, and even her mind: she was more soft, more solemn; and more touching than the very light in which she sat. Fatigued by the efforts of the night, she made her

lassitude contribute to her graces : with her dark hair spread on her marble neck, with the glow of exertion yet on her cheek, with her voice almost depressed to a whisper, and her conversation confined to a few remarks, that like the copy of Homer in Darius's casket, breathed the soul of genius from a vehicle of perfume, she exhibited a soft suppression, a veiled and waning splendour, not so dazzling to the senses, but more touching to the heart.

Music resounded from various parts of the garden, accompanied only by the echo and the stilly rushing of the breeze. Armida was pressed to sing alone : she declined it from the fatigue of her late exertions, but from time to time she joined in the harmony with tones whose rich and tempered fulness was like the sounds of some invisible instrument ; and sometimes in the pause of the voices she executed a cadence so rapid, and sweet and subtile, as if a spirit in his passage

caught the sounds and carried them beyond human hearing.

Wandesford sat near her in the orange bower, the only one there whose sensation was not unmixed delight: his senses were indeed intranced, but his heart, or his passions rather, were agitated almost to frenzy: one moment he viewed her with rapture, the next almost with hatred, and the elegant but haughty politeness which marked her manner when she spoke to him mortified him more than the most obvious displeasure.

As the saffron light of an Italian sunrise broke on the garden, Wandesford retired, repeating to himself:—"She is a woman, therefore must be wooed; she is a woman, therefore may be won."

The moment that the intense heat of the following day rendered visiting practicable, Wandesford flew to the villa of Lord Montclare. In the portico all was silent and solitary: with difficulty he procured admission. An old female

servant was the only inhabitant of the villa.

“Where are Lord Montclare and his daughter?”

“This morning, signor, they quitted Naples on their way to France, from thence they propose to visit England, but never will return to Italy.”

Wandesford in silence returned to Naples.

CHAP. II.

In every state of life I feel a frightful void.

M. MAINTENON.

ARMIDA IN ENGLAND.

For several days Wandesford remained in a state of reverie: at first he imagined the impression would wear off, and his pride for a moment encouraged him in this hope; but after a few days experience of that silent and restless torment, which a spirit too proud for communication, and too impetuous for restraint, feels when compelled to suffer, he determined to pursue her in spite of rejection.

The restraints of his profession were soon removed by his interest and connexions, and taking advantage of the peace, he arrived in Paris, without a hint escaping him of the object of his

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expedition. His first inquiry was for Lord Montclare. On learning that his lordship and Miss Fitzalban had quitted Paris about a week before for England, his natural impatience broke out into fury, and he execrated Armida and her father with as much rage as if their invitation had brought him to France: but a few moments convinced him that the absence of this extraordinary female, whom he alternately seemed to love and hate, rendered France as insupportable as Italy, and he resolved to follow her to England, almost with a sentiment of revenge in the pursuit.

In the meantime Armida had been hurried by her father through Italy and France, without explanation, and almost without rest. Long accustomed to his sudden movements and rapid journeys, she felt little surprise at being compelled to quit Italy the morning after the splendid fête at Naples; but she was terrified at the paroxysms, almost amount-

ing to insanity, with which her father was visited during their progress, and this mystery of her fate, into which she had never inquired, seemed already to menace existence with future storms, like those dark spots which in the brilliant atmosphere of the west portend the approaching vengeance amid sun-shine and security.

It was an auspicious period for her arrival in France. Paris was just then filled with the plunder of Italy: her galleries groaned with the weight of their paintings, their statues, and their busts: every where were scattered inscriptions unexplored, and antiques undefined: literature, furniture, women, every thing at Paris was *a la grecq.* Armida's form revived all the images of classic beauty: Armida's songs recalled all the wonders of the classic fables: Armida's genius realized the glories of classic antiquity; but though delighted by the applauses she met in France, her

English mind and character were revolted by their frivolity, and from every other sentiment but admiration she retreated with precipitation.

But it was with strong emotion she prepared to visit England; the country of her ancestors, the country of her birth, the country where the mind, alike of man and woman, neither shackled by slavery or distorted by superstition, is permitted to attain its full growth, and appear in its grandest dimensions.

She arrived, tremblingly alive with the tumult of pride and hope, of ambition and solicitude: she had heard that the English were a reserved, phlegmatic people, slow in recognizing genius, and cautious in distributing praise.

But conscious of her powers, she collected them with confidence, enlarged her acquaintance with English literature, but awaited in a kind of silent inspiration the signal to run her race of glory on a wider plain, and before more illustrious witnesses.

* But what was the astonishment, the horror, of the beautiful, intelligent, and ambitious foreigner, on her first introduction to fashionable life in London: lost amid a crowd where beauty could not be distinguished; stunned by a buz of nothings, where mind could not be displayed; elbowed by rouged, naked, dashing dowagers; suffered to stand unnoticed, or eyed through a glass by yawning, lounging bucks of ton; sinking amid the crowd, to be permitted to help herself to refreshments, or to want them; to be without conversation, though a mistress of half the dead and living languages, from her ignorance of fashionable jargon; to walk down a set with a partner who appeared to be debating whether it would not be high ton to drop asleep during the exercise—what a reception for a woman who had seen at her feet Italy and France contending to scatter the laurels of fame and the roses of pleasure. At first she shrunk back

almost in terror, till her pride came to her relief, and she determined to display her talents in spite of rudeness or apathy, for she still believed she had only to display them to command in a moment that admiration of which the absence was insupportable, though while possessing it she had felt its emptiness. But she soon found it was not to gaze on beauty and grace, or to listen to eloquence and harmony, that the fashionable crowds of London were collected. In a crowded ball-room she could not display the various phases of her beautiful figure, which required rather a theatre than an assembly for their exhibition. When she sung, the rage of gaming abated for a moment in the adjacent rooms; but after a few stares and bravos, the conversation turned on Moore's Ballads, or Braham's Anglo-Italian songs. The connoisseurs indeed applauded, but not like the connoisseurs of Italy: there was no suspended respiration, no uplifted eyes, no outspread hands, as

It to support her in her aerial flights: nothing of that enthusiasm which gives the performer the powers it applauds. Her paintings gave still less delight, for still fewer are judges of good painting than of good music, and to herself they seemed as if their colours had darkened since she brought them from Italy. Her beauty was indeed admired by all, and her taste in drapery admitted to be exquisite; but still she looked like none of the women of the day: her fantastic elegance was more the result of taste than of prescription: she wanted the uniform of the corps of fashion, that identity of costume which for a season transforms the whole female world into the representation of one figure.

When she attempted to collect around her an intellectual circle, the diffidence of her first repulse still sat heavy on her spirits, and she felt the difference between addressing foreigners, superficial, ardent, and fond of admiring, and Eng-

lishmen, slow in discovering talent, and jealous in critical honour.

The enthusiasm which she despaired of communicating she at length despaired of feeling. A thick dark medium seemed to rise between her and her audience: she struggled to collect her faculties to maintain her former reputation, to recall those images that once hovered round her like the attendant spirits of an enchantress, and to re-touch that language whose colours once glowed like those of her paintings; but the very effort destroyed that imprompted facility that gives to genius the appearance of inspiration. Her thoughts, her language, became confused. She hesitated, grew embarrassed, and more than once retired that she might avoid bursting into tears. In those moments of dejection, amazed and shocked at the change in her existence, she began to fear that her faculties were impaired, and terrified by this apprehension, the brilliant and haughty Armida

suddenly became the most reserved and timid of her sex.

It was at this period that Wandesford arrived in England, still eager in the pursuit that had led him from Naples to London: he expected to see the same splendid and commanding character that he had beheld at the Italian fête, whose scenes still floated before him like the visions of enchantment. What was his astonishment at being shewn into a crowded assembly, where all was gaming, frenzy, and riot; females fainting; beside ice-eating beaux, a chaos of rouged wrinkles, opera hats, quizzing glasses, and gossamor drapery. Armida, alone, unattended, unadmired, addressed by no tongue, defended by no arm from the crowd that bore her on like an uprooted flower in a boisterous flood, seeming from her beauty, and from her loneliness feeling like the inhabitant of another world. Wandesford paused to assure himself that it was she herself whom he saw. He

pressed through the crowd to join her: there was an independence in her thus refusing to compromise her superiority, for the frivolity of fashion that made her more congenial than ever to the pride and hauteur of Wandesford. He remained near her the whole evening: her character developed itself more fully to him; and his mind, well worn as it was with the objects of the world, was strongly excited by one so new.—A young female, so beautiful, so highly endowed, so ambitiously conscious of genius, so tremblingly alive to fame, yet so shaded by melancholy, and a kind of proud dejection, like that of an abdicated monarch, turning forth the silver lining of her sable cloud of sadness every moment, and gladdening the spectator with unexpected brightness, then again retreating behind it, as if she mocked their admiration and her own lustre.

Wandesford employed all his talents to excite and to praise her's; and he

himself was not insensible of the pleasure of having all his faculties called out, and tasked to support a conference with a beautiful female hardly twenty. Armida's refulgent eyes flashed with the fire of awakened genius once more, and when they turned to him they shone through the brilliant dews of grateful sensibility. She was grateful for his attention, and, accustomed only to praise, felt herself involuntarily revived by his: she felt the pleasure of having a companion in the crowded solitude of a fashionable party: when she spoke it was with the certainty of one delighted listener, and when she sung she could distinguish the rapturous applause of Wandesford. Vanity and interest enabled Wandesford to act the part of an assiduous lover for a whole winter, in spite of his natural indolence and selfish surliness: at the end of that period he offered her his hand in the most timid language of respectful adoration.

Lord Montclare eagerly accepted his proposal, and urged them on his daughter with an importunity scarce inferior to that of Wandesford himself. Importuned, flattered, persecuted, by Wandesford, her father, and the eternal monk, she consented ; but as she pronounced the words, a coldness, like that of death, seemed to seize on her heart, and amid Wandesford's raptures she shocked him by bursting into tears. Lord Montclare, who had only waited her decision, immediately announced to Armida and Wandesford that their marriage should take place in Ireland, where he purposed going in a few days, and spending, he added in a faltering voice, the remainder of his days. Accustomed as Armida was to fly from one region to another, she trembled at the thoughts of the savage country she was to visit. Wandesford, who was anxious for the eclat of his marriage, suppressed his murmurs with difficulty, but at length it was arranged.

that Lord Montclare and his daughter should set off immediately for Ireland, and that Wandersford, after some necessary arrangements, should follow them to Connaught, where Lord Montclare's estate lay, and receive the hand of Armida in their ancient castle on the shores of the Atlantic.

CHAP. III.

O'Hara, O'Mara, O'Morven, O'More,
O'Donovan-arra, Mac Millan, Gillore,
All houses so noble, so worthy, so old,
One drop of their blood is worth ounces of gold.

IRISH DYNASTIES.

ARMIDA IN IRELAND.

THE next day at an early hour Lord Montclare and his daughter quitted London: the pomp and tumult of the equipage, the crowd of servants, and the speed of their journey, as if they were flying to some region of happiness, formed a strange contrast to the gloom and dejection of the travellers. Accustomed only to the eclat of a capital, and to pass from one scene of luxury to another, Armida felt a desolation of heart at the

prospect of the Irish journey she had never known before.

She sunk back in the carriage, and covering her face with her handkerchief, resigned herself almost to despair. From the moment of their arrival in Ireland Lord Montclare's spirits seemed to revive, and at the close of the third day's journey, as Armida, exhausted with fatigue and dejection, sat with her eyes fixed on the bleak waste of bog, scarce seen through the rain that beat heavily against the carriage windows, Lord Montclare suddenly said :—

“Do you know, Armida, that you have relations in Ireland?”

“Have I, my lord,” was the answer, and nothing more was said for two hours : Lord Montclare then, apparently forcing himself to proceed, added :—

“Yes you have, and it is necessary you should know something about them.”

Armida appeared to listen, and her

✓ father, with many pauses of strong emotion, informed her that the estate in Ireland had been purchased from a ruined Milesian family; that going thirty years ago to take possession, his sister, who accompanied him, had unfortunately become attached to the son of the ancient proprietor, whom he described as living among his tenants in all the pride, poverty, and sloth, of a true Milesian; that immediately on her disgraceful marriage she had been renounced not only by her own family, but by her husband's father, who was irreparably offended at his son marrying the sister of the man whom he considered rather as the usurper than the purchaser of his property.

“I quitted Ireland immediately,” continued Lord Montclare, “and the first notice I ever took of them since was in consequence of a letter I received from my unfortunate sister about a year ago, upon her death-bed: had I not known

the circumstances under which it was written I would never have perused it. She described the misery in which she and her husband had lingered through many years of indigence, the loss of most of their children through actual want of sustenance : she entreated my compassion for her wretched husband, who had fallen into the lowest habits of dissolute poverty, and my protection for her two surviving children, whom she described as kneeling, scarcely clad, beside her dying bed of straw."

Armida shuddered.

"My resentment was appeased," continued her father. "I wrote to Ireland to inquire about them: I learned that the old savage had taken his eldest grandson to starve with him amid the ruins of his castle, that the second was running wild about the bogs in the neighbourhood, and that their father was living with any of the tenants who could afford to share the shelter of their

cabin. Though I never could recognize him as my brother-in-law, or them as my nephews, I did not wish to be insulted by their poverty ; I therefore appointed him my land steward, and offered the young men commissions on condition of their immediately going abroad : the father gratefully accepted my offer for himself and his younger son ; the elder haughtily rejected it, and preferred starving with his ridiculous, mad, grandfather, who resides, I am told, in a ruined watch-tower on the border of his ancient demesne. The younger brother went to Italy to join Wandesford's regiment, in which I got him a commission. I think you must have seen him in London ; he came one morning into the library to thank me. I dismissed him as soon as possible. His likeness to his mother shocked me."

" And was he so near a relative," said Armida, " and I knew nothing of it? Oh, he was the most exquisite model of

Bathyllus in Moore's Anacreon I ever beheld."

Lord Montclare viewed his daughter well for a moment, but he perceived she was speaking with her imagination, not her feeling: she was thinking more of the picture than of the man; yet it struck him that the removal of his nephew was not improvident, and that the figure of this forlorn boy might in solitude have recalled the images of classic beauty too strongly to Armida's imagination. Lord Montclare then pursued his invectives against the pride and insolence of the old savage grandfather, the dissolute abjectness of the son, and the poverty of the grandsons, for it appeared that he had no other crime to object to these desolate young men. Armida mused in silence on the picture, drawn by a rough, unfavourable hand as it was: it was the first subject that occupied her mind during the journey; the inflexible pride and high-thoughted poverty of the old

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Irish prince; the submissness of his degenerate son, who could accept an office, almost servile, within the walls of which he was born to be the master; and the two youths, her cousins, nursed amid the strife of pride and want, so favourable to the romantic spirit that appeases the gnawings of actual distress by listening to tales of high-seated ancestry, that comforts itself in being compelled to inhabit ruins by tracing among them the remains of ancient palaces; that like the spirit in Otranto stalks amid its ancient seat till it smells beyond it, and stands forth amid the fragments dilated and revealed, terrifying the intrusion of modern usurpers. Again she thought of the elder brother, who persisted in remaining with his grandfather; the image had struck her—a young man thus clinging with romantic attachment, with ancient duty, to an aged relative in want and abasement, in solitude and sorrow, wasting the rich verdure of his youth and

hopes on a comfortless and fallen ruin. Again she inquired about this eldest son. Her father could tell her no more: he only knew that he had resisted the importunities of his father and brother to quit his grandfather, and share with them the protection of Lord Montclare. He was proud, solitary, and repulsive, and declined all assistance from the gentlemen of the country.

"Such is the family," said Lord Montclare, "with whom till to-day you knew not your relationship."

"And was it for the purpose of recognizing it your lordship took the trouble of coming to Ireland?" said Armida.

"No, not for that purpose, not altogether. The purpose for which I came to Ireland is not yet to be told," said Lord Montclare, with strong emotion. It was unobserved by Armida, for at that moment the view opening on the sea drew even from her a cry of admiration.

The character of the scene was gran-

deur—dark, desolate, and stormy grandeur. The sea, troubled with rains and winds, dashed its grey waves along a line of rocky coast with a violence that seemed even in the absence of a storm to announce perpetual war and unexhausted winter. The dark clouds, though they moved rapidly along, never left the horizon clear, and seemed too thick for rains to melt or storms to disperse. The country near the shore, brown, stony, and mountainous, looked as if the sun never shone on it, as if it lay for ever under the grey and watery sky: the shore itself, bold, high, and sweeping, had all the savage precipitateness, the naked solitude, the embattled rockiness, which nature seems to throw round her as a fortress, where she retires from the assaults of the elements, and the approach of man. Yet Armida could descry on one of the boldest promontories, that stood forth like a bulwark against the ocean, a pile of buildings, which at first, from its dark grey

hue and giant massiveness, seemed like a part of the rock it stood on. A solitary tower or two, perched on a bare rock, and a few islands near the shore, appeared to be contending for their existence amid the loud and restless war of waters.

To Armida, accustomed only to the sunny regions of Italy, or the cultivated fields of England, the effect of such a scene was like that of a new world. She shuddered at the idea of becoming the inhabitant of such a country; and she thought she felt already the wild transforming effect of its scenery.

As the carriages wound along the steep road the castle rose to her view, a rude, shapeless, wide-spreading structure, the work of different ages: part of it had been repaired for their reception: yet it still retained its old and warlike character, its bastions hoary with the foam of the sea, and its battlements that seemed fit for the nests of eagles. As they passed beneath a broken arch through a court

strewn with fragments of its once embattled wall, Armida, looking backward on the precipice on whose very edge it stood, saw far below a number of people on a rock. Through the strait between them, steep and narrow, the sea rushed with a violence that whitened the cliffs to their summit: yet they stood, and Armida could perceive that their looks were fixed intently on the train that was entering the castle. At this moment the servants gathered round the carriage with looks of fear, and Lord Montclare learned from them with difficulty that the group consisted of the old Irish prince, supported by his grandson, and still attended by a few followers, who stood there to take a last view of their ancient seat, from which the arrival of the new possessor had excluded them for ever. Lord Montclare, throwing himself back in the carriage, impatiently bid them drive on: but at the moment his superb equipage and retinue entered the walls of the cas-

tle, a cry, the most bitter that ever pierced the human ear, burst from the crowd below. Lord Montclare and his daughter shuddered, and scarcely thought themselves safe within their castle. It was a sound that expressed all the wild feelings of a savage people, mixed with grief, despair, and agonized attachment. The rocks, the towers, and the shores rung again. The spirited horses that drew the carriage became terrified and ungovernable in a moment, and tormented by the broken pavement, they reared backward, till the carriage, driven beyond the arch, hung on the edge of the precipice. Lord Montclare, leaping out, called on his servants to assist his daughter, in vain: the horses wheeling round, began to gallop down the precipice with frightful fury.

Armida beheld her death inevitable; but at the moment she gave herself up a figure darted from the opposite rock, and approached on the very side of danger

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with a rapidity almost equal to that with which she was whirled along. Her imagination full of terror, she thought that the Irish prince was rushing forward to seize and dash her from the precipice; and as the figure approached she screamed aloud to him to spare her life. Her senses failed her when she felt him snatch her from the carriage through the door, which was still open, nor did she recover them until she found herself in her father's arms: she had then a faint recollection of a tall figure bending over her, and a long curl of raven hair touching her cheek as in a dream. She tremblingly inquired how she had been preserved, and learned that when her danger had driven even her father to a distance, the man who she supposed meant to murder had saved her life at the hazard of his own, and after supporting her in his arms till her servants thought it safe to approach her, resigned her to them without speaking, and disappeared almost with as

much swiftness as he flew to save her. No one knew who he was, but from his silence, his figure, and a romantic dress which none of them could describe, all concluded him to be the grandson of the old Milesian.

As Armida, pale and exhausted, was borne once more through the court by the servants, at a frightful distance below she saw the mangled horses wallowing amid the fragments of the carriage from which she had been snatched but a few moments before it was dragged down the precipice : again she fainted, and was carried insensible to her apartment.

CHAP. IV.

Though thy tackle's torn
Thou show'st a noble vessel.

SHAKESPEARE.

It was midnight before Armida was restored to perfect recollection. Broken, uneasy slumbers followed her swoons: at length she started up, and looked around her. The splendid furniture which Lord Montclare had ordered from England was not yet arrived, and the apartment she was in bore the aspect of preceding centuries: its dark spaciousness, its wainscotting of oak black as ebony, its coved ceiling, and huge windows with small dim panes, were scarcely seen by the lights that burned on a table of black marble beside her bed. Her foreign servants were sitting pale and aghast by an immense turf fire that burn-

ed on the hearth, for grates were unknown in this Irish castle.

Armida inquired for her father: he had retired to rest, "And so have all the people in the castle," said the women, "except ourselves."

"Has every one retired?" cried Armida, listening. "What noise is that I hear then, so deep, and so continued?"

"It is the noise of the sea," said the women: "the tide is coming in, and the waves they say often dash against the walls of this melancholy old castle."

Armida dismissed her attendants, who, wearied by their journey, gladly retired. She tried to compose herself to rest: it was impossible: her mind was agitated by the events of the day. She rose, and going to the huge casement, which required all her strength to open, threw herself on a seat beside it. All was still, dark, and vast. No sight of human habitation, no sound of human life—the sky, the rocks, the ocean, and the moon—nothing

else above or below. Her mind was awed into a kind of passiveness that resembled repose; and though chilled by the night breeze, she continued to gaze on, till she saw a figure moving on the rocks below. It approached till nearly opposite her casement. Neither shape nor dress were distinguishable; but the stature appeared more than human.

A thousand gloomy thoughts of Irish atrocity rushed into her mind—What if the Milesian prince or his grandson were come to curse the usurpers of their castle by the only light their pride would permit them to view its alienated walls by! For a moment she thought of calling for assistance, till the recollection that she knew nothing of the immense edifice she was in checked her. She watched the figure in silence. In a few minutes she saw another approach, whose stooping frame and feeble steps marked extreme age. Armida could not distinguish his motions, but in a few moments

she heard the sound of an instrument, faint, tremulous, and wild. It was the Irish harp, touched by a native on his own wild shores, and accompanied by a voice, which, though broken by age, sounded like music in despair. The taller figure threw himself at his length on the rock, and seemed to listen to forgetfulness. The instrument was defective, and the hand of the performer weak with age; but Armida forgot all science while she listened to him, and felt the effect of the scenery united with the sound.

The music, though unlike any she had ever praised as excellent, had a charm superior to that excellence: it had a character impossible to define, but impossible to resist: it appealed from rules to the heart, and its simplicity made the appeal resistless, as the inarticulate cry of infancy affects more deeply than the utmost eloquence of distress.

Armida, nursed in the classic elegance

of Italian melody, wept as she listened to the rude song of the Irish bard. Once, oppressed by a variety of emotions, she sobbed aloud. The tall figure started, and turned at the sound, and then hastily retired with his companion. At that moment the moon shone bright on the rock, and she distinguished the figure.

It was the young Milesian, who had wandered forth under the shadow of his hereditary walls, attended by his bard, to listen to tales of other days, and feed his soul with visions of pride and melancholy.

“Strange, inconsistent being!” said Armida: “he can hazard his life for a stranger; he can feast on the luxuries of midnight music; and he flies from the sound of gratitude or sympathy.”

She felt no wish to remain at the casement after he was gone, and retired to bed, which she did not quit till summoned to dinner on the following day. As she entered the room, she observed a

person whom her father slightly mentioned to her by the name of Mr. Randall O'Morven, and whom from his conversation she soon discovered to be her uncle. Neither his past distress, the coldness of Lord Montclare, or the degradation of taking his place under the roof he was born to inherit as a kind of upper servant to its present possessor, appeared to make the least impression on this man, who possessed the worst kind of Irish character, a character of unfeeling, unworthy self-enjoyment, not destitute of affection, but wholly without dignity. He talked, laughed, ate and drank, with a vulgar ease, and seemed to forget both his father and his children, till Lord Montclare happened to mention his second son, who was in Wandesford's regiment, and with it was daily expected in Ireland.

"Aye, my lord," said O'Morven, "there is a boy for you. Who would think that he was brother to that foolish boy who rejected your lordship's protec-

tion? There he has shut himself up in a hovel with that old fool my father, and all my hopes of him are destroyed; and it was not for my want of speaking to him either, for says I to him, as I said, 'Why, Connel, where's the use of your refusing his lordship's kindness? Where did I get this good coat on my back, and a seat at his table (for your lordship promised I should not dine with the servants)? and where did your brother get his commission? Was it not from his lordship condescending to take us up, and forgetting our offence in being his relations?' And says I, 'Do you think that poring over an old Irish manuscript, or wandering over these wild shores, listening to an old harp with hardly a string to it will put a potatoe in your mouth, or give one stone to repair those ruins you live in, or bring you back your land to you again?'

Here Lord Montclare interrupted him by observing that Miss Fitzalban was indebted to his son for the preservation of

her life. "Aye, my lord, so I heard. The fellow is brave enough, but then so wild and so proud, that I'll engage he never stayed so much as to be thanked for it. Why you might as well get a word from one of those goats that are scampering on the cliffs there; and he is just as mute and as active as them. Why now, your lordship would not believe that no power of mortal man could bring him once within these walls since your lordship purchased them: and, simple as you sit there, my lord, -he considers you as an usurper of his natural rights, and would scorn to eat the bread from your hand that I am swallowing now."

Armida, wearied and shocked, now rose to withdraw one of the windows of the great Gothic hall in which they dined, opening on a terraced rock that had formerly been one of the ramparts of the castle. She wandered along it till she reached a flight of steps, which, after many windings, led to the shore, and when

the tide was in were often covered with foam to the topmost step. The strand was now dry, the evening calm though gloomy, the heavy clouds level with the horizon. She walked on till she reached a solitary rock, covered with mosses, shells, and spars, whose green and sparkling beauty amid such solitude made it seem like the throne of the spirit of the waters. Here she sat, and for some hours sunk into the deep absence of mind, that, though it precludes reflection, does not shut out pain.

The strange destiny that in the space of a year had changed a brilliant native of Italy, surrounded by crowds, flattery, and intellectual luxury, into a solitary wanderer on the rude and barren shores of Ireland, seemed to chill her very mind. Her thoughts did not move; they lay under the load: urged by the pressure, her mind at length recurred to the image of Wandesford as the companion of her future life, as the only resource that pre-

sented itself to her imagination, wrested from all its usual objects. It was then she discovered the secret of her heart. His image was not the image to which the mind delights to turn in solitude. She thought of him with complete apathy, and in the desolation of her heart wept aloud. The encreasing murmurs of the sea at length aroused her. She looked round. During her long reverie, the tide coming rapidly in, already surrounded her, and completely intercepted her return to the shore she had quitted. In the first confusion of her fear she escaped through a shallow water to a rock, on which it had not yet encroached, but gazing round, she saw with terror the one she had quitted in a few moments covered by the waves, which now almost rose to the summit of that she stood on: every other between her and the shore had disappeared, and the castle itself scarcely showed its dim towers through the twilight, darkened as it was

by a gathering storm. The terror of her situation every moment encreased. The waves, though not deep, would have completely exhausted her strength in the attempt to wade through them. The hollow sweeping of the surge mocked every effort to be heard at that distance. The waves already reached her feet, though she had retreated to the highest point of the rock that yet remained uncovered, and their sullen sound as they reached her seemed to announce that their next summons would not be in vain.

Gloomy as life had appeared but a moment before, the thoughts of death, and of such a death, were beyond expression horrible. She exerted her utmost strength to scream for assistance, and waved the shawl she had thrown over her; but the echo and the wind seemed to sport with them only to aggravate her despair.

Far to the left there was a chain of rocks, stretching to the shore; but to

reach them was impossible; yet she continued to gaze on them as if they could help her, when she suddenly descried a figure bounding along them from point to point with an activity and force that seemed more than human. Strong as was her wish for life, the darkness, the perfect silence, the super-human speed of this figure, terrified her, and she shrieked, as plunging from the nearest point of the rock he swam towards her, with a bold and rapid arm, and the next moment ascended the crag, where she still clung, caught her in his arms, and while she despaired of life, placed her beyond the reach of danger. They were still, however, far from the castle; but neither rocks nor waves seemed to impede her preserver, who darted on with a speed that even terrified her, though it saved her.

They were now within a short distance of the castle, when Armida at once felt the necessity of thanking the stranger,

and felt she was unable to do so : his silence, his repulsive character, and the circumstances of terror and danger under which she had twice met him (for she knew it was the young Milesian), awed and depressed her. Eloquent and polished as she was, she felt all the embarrassment of ignorance ; and the strong pulsation of his heart, which she felt distinctly while in his arms, whether caused by emotion or speed, seemed to communicate its agitation to her own. In the confusion she produced her purse, and timidly offered it to his acceptance. It was dark, and as the stranger stood at some distance from her, she did not see the haughtiness with which he retreated from her. She followed him, and only remembering his poverty, repeated her request.

“ I am an O’Morven,” said the young man, proudly, “ of a race, who, though they have nothing now to bestow, have not yet learned how to receive. To me

an act of humanity is no effort, nor could I risk any thing of less value to me than life."

Armida, now insulted in her turn, hurried with faltering steps to the castle, from which the servants had been dispatched in every direction in quest of her; and when she reached her apartment dismissed her terrified attendants, who crowded round her, unwilling to betray the conflict of emotions that divided her mind.

"Let him go," said she, at length, when she found herself alone; "the proud savage; let him go, since his pride can thus insult those whom his courage and his humanity astonish and subdue. How he tried to degrade the effort he had made, that he might degrade the object of it: it was mere humanity, and I was of no more value in his eyes than a perishing mendicant: it was not so in Italy." And the tears of pride and anger gushed fast from her eyes.

Yet often that night, the model of perfection which his figure displayed visited her dreams, and the rich and awful harmony of his voice, though she had heard it in anger, came to her ear in the pauses of the storm that howled round the castle, and when she rose, she determined to pass the day in writing to Wandesford, that she might exclude the thoughts that filled her mind too much with the stranger. The next day, however, the visits of the neighbourhood, whom curiosity had rendered impatient to see her, left her not a moment's leisure. The impressions which she gave and received will be best described by the following letters, the first of which was written by an ancient dowager, who resided a few miles from the castle.

To Mrs. Margaret Malone:

Merrion Square, Dublin.

"Well, I have seen this foreign wonder. I have been at Lord Mont-

clare's: never was so disappointed in my life: as to her beauty, perhaps it cannot be denied, but then it is quite the fixed, lifeless beauty of one of the statues in her room, that with their nakedness and their dead eyes absolutely stare one out of countenance.

"As to her grace and expression that every one is raving about, I say it is downright affectation.

"Her head is absolutely turned with accomplishments, and taste and *virtu*, and all the rest of that heathenish jargon that her father taught her in Italy.

"Only think of a woman who lives in a world of her own, among paintings, and poetry, and music, that lives with them, talks to them, says her prayers to them for ought I know: a woman that wastes her whole life poring over some odious naked antique, or working herself into fits of feeling with her harp, or lounging on an ill-contrived seat that she calls classical, while her maid twists

her hair into the shape of every fantastical bust in the room.

“ And to what purpose is all this : has it made her happy : no, I can read strongly in her looks pride and melancholy : it has not even procured her the advantage that a common education with good sense and the manners of the world ensures to an ordinary female : there is my grand-daughter, Lady Gabriella, appears a thousand times more like a woman of this world, though their accomplishments admit of no comparison. As to her dancing and singing, nobody understands, nor nobody likes it : I never saw any thing like it but a stage-play : I never beheld such a scene in my life as she exhibited. The last day we dined there, when she condescended, as it was called; to display her talents, after entreating an hour for a song, which she told us in pretty plain language we could neither understand nor enjoy, she rose at last and threw herself beside her harp,

but such sounds as she uttered, it was not like any thing I had ever heard before : sometimes it was like a bird in the air, so wild and high, and sometimes so faint and low, just like a creature that was sighing their life away ; and her arms sinking from the harp, and her head declined, and her bosom heaving, really I could not help asking what pleasure there was in listening to what brought the tears into everybody's eyes : well, when that was over, she suffered herself to be prevailed on to dance. The carpet was rolled off, all the card-tables pushed away : I lost a rubber of five by it : I had the game in my hand, but when the dancing began, I never was so amazed : no performer but herself : we were all laid by for spectators.

“ I protest, she was more like one of those heathen figures in her apartment, those graces, or Venus Anno Domini's, one of those half-naked, half-mad figures that one sees in a fine painting, than any

thing human : such attitudes, such movements, and what was worse, such pauses. She glided round the room as if she wanted wings only to fly, and at last she sunk upon one knee, her eyes thrown upward, and her arms extended. I really thought she was falling, and screamed out for some one to go and help her ; then she sprang from the ground, declared it was impossible for her to display her talents where she could not inspire the enthusiasm she felt, throw herself on the sofa, and did nothing but drink lemonade and talk of Italian sensibility for the rest of the evening : as to her sensibility, it is all romance, just mere impulse and caprice. I will give you a specimen of it.—You know Rose St. Austin, a distant relation, that I took from that foolish old parson, her uncle, gave her every advantage, suffered her to listen to all the instructions that my grand-daughter, Lady Gabriella, received from her masters ; well, at these parties the ladies met. Rose, by the

bye, is just as fantastic in her own way as Miss Fitzalban, so the meeting was conducted according to the statute laws of romance: they stared at each other, saw congenial souls in each other's eyes, and the way they fastened up their hair, embraced, vowed eternal friendship; and almost without asking my leave, Rose has become an inmate at the Castle of Montclare; but mark my words, Margaret Malone, Rose will never know what misery is till she has been there a month longer: the sublimities of false feeling will evaporate, and nothing but pride and caprice will remain. Miss Fitzalban has changed her plain name already into Rosine; next she will proceed to change something else, her plain appearance into some of those naked antiques she is so fond of, or her plain bible principles into those wicked infidel notions she got abroad: now Rose will not bear that, for she has a good stubborn spirit of her own, and when it comes to that, after a long

speech in French and two songs in Italian, Miss Fitzalban will say to her in plain English—'Quit the castle, for I like you no longer.' Depend upon it this will be the end, as sure as I am my dear Margaret's affectionate friend,

"GERTRUDE KILCARRICK."

"P. S. After all I am quite provoked at Rose leaving us, for she was an excellent foil for Lady Gabriella, who is prodigiously improved, grown quite a beauty, quite a brilliant creature. I wish to heaven I could keep her from rambling so much on the rocks where those ruined O'Morvens live: I don't like it. Burn this scrawl."

To the Reverend Albert St. Austin.

"You will be surprised, my dear uncle, to find me writing from Montclare Castle; and though I have been here three days, I am still as much surprised myself. Do you remember the delight

with which I spoke of Miss Fitzalban's arrival: the report of her character, her talents, and the contrast between such a being and the inhabitants of a remote country like this, filled me with the most vivid curiosity: yet, when the invitation arrived, and Lady Kilcarrick declared her intention of bringing me, I actually trembled at my own inferiority, and would have given any thing to accompany them invisibly, or like Cinderilla in masquerade. I comforted myself, however, with thinking that where Lady Gabriella was I might hope to pass unnoticed, and see the whole battle behind her shield. I must give you the scene on our arrival.—There was a large company, and Lord Montclare received us with that cold politeness that chills one into insignificance. He is a proud, solemn, sallow personage, who wears his peerage in his very look. I did not venture to raise my eyes till I heard him desire some of the servants to inform Miss Fitzalban of Lady Kilcar-

rick's arrival: the summons, however, did not bring her: she entered late, spoke only to the few who were near her, and till dinner was announced my curiosity was tortured with glimpses of her figure and murmurs of her voice. At dinner by some chance she placed herself next me: I would have retired, but she detained me with some expressions of politeness, of which I literally could not hear the words for the music. You will think me an enthusiast, dear uncle, but unless I wrote in poetry I cannot describe the ethereal goddess-like character of her beauty, yet I cannot tell the peculiar charm that affects you: she has no natural colour, no vivacity, she speaks little, and her dress was the simplest in the room. She was in white muslin, but she had some rich ornaments on her arms and neck, and the beauty of her dark hair, the taste with which it was arranged, and her light dress, that seemed like drapery thrown over a statue, gave a kind of poe-

tica' character to her figure that made it hardly seem substantial. Just opposite to us Lady Gabriella was seated ; beautiful indeed, and glowing with youth and spirits, but with her showy vivacity, her high complexion, and all the colours of Flora or Pomona in her dress : what a contrast to the Doric graces of Armida. She spoke but little, and only to me : her manners though cold are exquisitely polished, and they have a commanding ease, which, though the result of pride, gives her hearer a kind of confidence. In the evening there was some general conversation, and literature was mentioned : then at length she spoke, and though evidently with no effort, it still seemed painful to her reserve and languor. After much importunity she was prevailed on to sing : I saw she undertook it with despondency, as if wanting confidence in her hearers ; she could feel none in herself, yet she began to sing, and then I first lamented my

ignorance of foreign music, for though some passages made me shiver, and some made me weep, I felt I was not judge enough to appreciate the powers she displayed. In some parts of her voice I felt as if I was mounting a precipice with her, and grew bewildered and giddy with the difficulties of the way: after all, there was one low and simple song, which a connoisseur would laugh if he heard me say I preferred, but it came over me like moonlight after the glare of a burning day, and drew from me the sweetest tears that pleasure ever shed.

“ But not for all her talents would I feel the lassitude with which she retired to her seat, and seemed by some strange exemption to be the only one there who could give delight, but who could not feel it. She has been destroyed by flattery, intellectual luxury, and a too strong and too early excitement of her sensibility; that like a flower torn open in the bud, has withered before it has blown.

After her performance, think, my dear uncle, of Lady Gabriella singing, and exhibiting her wretched drawings, which Lady Kilcarrick had brought in the carriage. Armida listened, and looked with painful politeness: her mind is too great for ridicule, or she might have 'fooled them to the top of their bent,' but she has no female littleness of heart: if her character was more common she might be more happy: she must have thought both music and drawings execrable, but she bowed and was silent: after her, what followed was to me insupportable; and while the company were occupied with Lady Gabriella's portfolio, I was examining Armida's beautiful paintings with which the room was filled, till I was afraid of suggesting an invidious comparison to them; and taking a book that lay on one of the tables, I retired to a little boudoir where the scent of the orange-flowers invited me, and forgotten by all, forgot myself, till I heard Miss

Fitzalban's voice, who had entered the boudoir alone, inquiring what employed me so intently. At first I was going to shut the book; but the next moment, urged by an impulse for which I could not account, I gave it to her, and pointed out the very passage I was reading. It was in the *Adventurer*, the beautiful tale of Almerine and Shelimah:—"But Almerine, whom ambition was thus ready to obey, who was revered by hoary wisdom, and beloved by youthful beauty, was perhaps the most wretched of her sex. Perpetual adulation had made her haughty and proud: her penetration and delicacy rendered almost every object offensive. She was disgusted with imperfections which others could not discover," &c. &c. After giving her the book, I stood before her trembling like a criminal before a judge. I felt I had behaved with unpardonable audacity according to common rules. She read the passage through with an unbroken voice,

and then returned the book to me.—
‘The voice of sincerity ought to be pleasing to me,’ said she, ‘from its novelty, for from my birth till now I believe I have never heard it. You must stay with me. I need not ask you to be my friend, for that you have dared to be already in the lesson you have given me to-night.’ Whether my late temerity had exhausted me I cannot tell, but I made no opposition. Lady Kilcarrick gave an ungracious assent, and I have since remained at the castle. I know not yet how I feel, or what to think of my situation. At times the superiority of her character overpowers and dazzles me, and at others her habitual lassitude and melancholy places me a thousand degrees above her in the scale of happiness. Lord Montclare is sufficiently polite, and any other female humble as I am would be happy; yet at times, my dear uncle, I feel as if I were in some enchanted palace, where destiny had confined some

beautiful fairy queen, and where the spell of enchantment had frozen up her charms, her graces, and her fascinations, and shed a gloom over all the grandeur by which she was surrounded.

“ ROSE ST. AUSTIN.”

The following day Armida wrote to Colonel Wandesford.

“ You complain of my silence, yet what can be expected from the desert shores of Ireland. I appear to have reached the limits of human existence. I have nothing to communicate, for I have nothing to feel. Perhaps I have been always too much dependant on society for my impressions; but this dependence, if it destroyed the originality of my character, increased its resources. What would I give now for those applauses, those crowds, that gave my spirits a mechanical animation that is absolutely necessary to existence, where the real sensibility of pleasure is wanting.

" I am now sitting in a turret of this ancient castle : the waves of the Atlantic are roaring around me : the grey clouds are sailing above my head. I see nothing but the foam, that rises to the very casement : I hear nothing but the whistling wind and the solitary scream of the sea-fowl. In the calmest day the wind is heard loudly among these rocks, and through the long passages of the castle. Sometimes the sun breaks out for a moment, and sheds a green light on the distant grassy hills, like a ray of imagination playing on a withered heart ; but I see far off the sweeping shadows of the clouds, that come to extinguish it, and feel it gone before it disappears. This solitude might be favourable to deep reflection, but I have so much real melancholy in my heart I am afraid to think. In Italy, amid her roseate landscapes and purpureal lights, I often indulged a luxurious melancholy, because amid such scenes there was no danger in the indul-

gence: it formed a kind of shade to the brilliant picture that was before me. But here there is no contrast between my mind and my situation, and I feel like an enchantress who has gone beyond her circle, and dreads to raise the spirits she can no longer govern.

" Yet here I have met with a character that has no alliance with the climate, a young female, whose constant and natural animation I admire, even more than the sincerity and simplicity of her character. I am amazed at the perseverance with which she reads, works, and sings, without any excitement, any impulse of flattery or imagination; how she flies over the rocks for exercise, and catches spirits from the breeze, whose coldness seems to chill my very mind. While reading only plunges me into reverie, and music brings images to me, like those of a dream, which I try in vain to define, Rosine employs every hour, though she hardly reads any thing but history, and

never has ventured to play or sing for company in her life. Her talents are mediocre : a thousand times a day I feel the superiority of my mind to her's, but what avails a superiority that does not procure happiness.

“ I am convinced I am an object of compassion to her—have I then been mistaken, Wandesford, or have those who made me what I am been mistaken in their estimate of life ? Are genius and imagination the enemies of happiness ? Does intellectual luxury debilitate and disease the mind as it does the frame ? If it be so, if I must die of this atrophy of the heart, let me not die here at least. In that happy climate, whose luxuries feast both the heart and the senses, where the sinking column is hid with roses, and the brilliant air at once breathes melody and perfumes, there let me resign an existence which the talents that could not adorn may perhaps commemorate, and to which the sensibility that has destroyed it

has given at times an enjoyment exquisite enough to compensate its loss."

Twice, on finishing her letter, Armida attempted to add something about the young Milesian, for she felt it like a breach of confidence to Wandesford to say nothing of the man of whom she thought so much, but she found herself unable to write of him. As she finished, the castle clock struck three, and she was preparing to retire to rest, when she heard the trampling of horses on the rocky road that wound under her apartment, and the next moment the heavy jarring of the great gates, as they were slowly unclosed by the half-wakened domestics. Surprised by the arrival of any one at so late an hour, she hastened into the gallery, and at the opposite end of the vast hall into which it opened saw a figure in a military dress pass to Lord Montclare's apartment. "It is young Mr. O'Morven, madam," said the servants, who saw her leaning from the

gallery ; " he has come to announce the arrival of Colonel Wandesford : the regiment has come to Ireland. Mr. O'Morven came with the first detachment, and the colonel will be here in a few days." " Wandesford here in a few days !" repeated Armida mechanically." A chill like that of death came over her, and at that moment the monotonous existence of which she had been complaining in her letter appeared happiness compared to the event of Wandesford's arrival. She remained for several minutes clinging to the gallery, as if it could have protected her from her own thoughts, till the approach of a quick light step recalled her to herself: it was young O'Morven, followed by his father, who was persuading him not to quit the castle at so late an hour. The young man gently but firmly declined his father's importunities, who retired in some displeasure, and Armida then recognised the sunny locks, the heaven blue eyes,

and the dazzling and ethereal bloom of the figure she had once seen in London. In the dim light in which she stood he could only discover it was a female, and he bowed to her with an air in which military pride was mixed with youthful humility. As she bowed to him, she could not help contrasting his youth, spirit, and softness, with the gloomy pride of his brother, and she inquired of the domestics, who were still in the hall, why he quitted the castle at so late an hour. "To visit his brother." "Visit his brother at this hour!" repeated Armida. "It is the only hour they can meet," said an Irish servant: "the old grandfather won't suffer the eldest to set foot within these walls, nor the youngest to come near the old ruin where he lives himself, so the poor lads can only get sight of each other by night, on the bare rocks, and it is there they will meet now." In the meantime, Desmond O'Morven was traversing the sea-worn path that led from

the castle to the lonely tower where his brother resided. From the period that his father and he had put themselves under the protection of Lord Montclare his implacable grandfather had forbid the brothers to meet, and confined the elder almost entirely to the ruin in which they resided. The night was dark, and the rough wind dashed the spray of an ebbing tide across his path at every step; but to Desmond the way was marked by traces he had never forgotten. He climbed the rude natural steps that led to the tower with a beating heart. On a crag of the rock, against which the waves were beating their white foam, scarce visible from time to time in the moon, whose pale and watery ray touched his form with something like a supernatural light, stood Connal O'Morven. The brothers rushed to each other's arms; but when Connal felt the weak and trembling frame of his brother, and remembered his recent wounds in Italy, he reproached

himself for exposing him to this cheerless interview. "Why did you wander out this bleak night?" "Only to meet one as bleak and comfortless as himself: one who has not even a roof to lead you under; who has nothing but a bare arm to shelter you." "It was to feel that arm folded round me," said Desmond, "that I quitted a roof where, except that, I had not a wish ungratified."

"Sit on this stone, at least," said Connal, "it is all I have to offer you. This is a desolate meeting," said he, as he placed himself between Desmond and the cold wind: "I cannot even see your face: the moon has set, and I long to see it. I long to feel the recollections which your voice and your touch has awakened confirmed by your looks." "They are much changed," said Desmond in an altered voice: "I am not the wild rustic that I was, burning with health and spirits; but though the blood has almost left my cheek, I feel it as warm at my

heart as ever this moment." "Desmond, you soften mine too much," said Connal, turning away. Desmond could not see the wildness of his expression as he spoke, but he marked the sublime and daring character of his brother's figure, as it stood braving the blast like his native tower that stood in the distance, dark, and stern, and desolate. Desmond felt his military enthusiasm revive as he gazed on him: he rose, and extended to its full length the giant arm of his brother that hung on his shoulder.

"But you are altered, Connal, since we parted: even by this light I can see how much you are altered: how tall and strong you are: I feel myself like a willow beside an oak." "Yes," said Connal, slowly withdrawing his arm, "I have grown, but not like the oak; I have grown like the sea-weed on these rocks, or the foliage that has spread among the battlements of that old tower, tall, worthless, and uncultivated, to sigh to the blast, and

wither on the spot I sprung from." "Connal," said Desmond, "this melancholy language gives me more pain than my absence from you." "I am seldom guilty of a murmur," said Connal, proudly recollecting himself: "the only part left me is that of stern endurance; yet there are moments, when, pressed by my hard fate, my heart, like Joseph in the Bible, amid all his constraint, will long at the sight of a brother, to fall on his neck, and even weep there." He threw himself on Desmond as he spoke, but Desmond, who was trembling with concealed emotions, eagerly seized on his brother's words to make a discovery, which since the first moment of their interview had pressed on his heart like a crime.

"Yes, Connal, there are such moments, and such are the present: I long, and yet I fear." At the word fear, Connal gave his brother a look, of which the other felt the expression, though in

the dark. "I know not what I fear," said Desmond, "for I have nothing to disclose. It began and ended like a dream, but such a dream, that I could sleep for ever to have it once more." At that moment the slow-passing light of a meteor shewed to Connal his brother's figure: its youthful perfection, even at eighteen, and the pale visionary light that fell on it, gave him an appearance almost ærial; and though Connal saw those light, luxuriant curls of gold, and that waxen skin, unchanged by war or a foreign climate, yet he saw Desmond's bloom was gone, and there was a voluptuous melancholy in his full blue eyes that spoke a premature change in his feelings. Touched by this expression, Connal spoke to him in a voice of encouragement, and Desmond poured out the secret with which his young heart was full.

"In the vessel in which I came over there was an Italian lady, who, with her family, was flying to England: I had

often seen her attendants, but never could obtain a sight of her or her daughter : that there was a daughter I was convinced, for sometimes of a mild night I saw two figures moving slowly along the deck, habited apparently alike, and conversing in whispers ; and the broken and mellow murmurs of their harmonious language, floating on the sea-breeze, were the pleasantest sounds that ever came to my ear. Sometimes, but very rarely, I heard the sound of a musical instrument coming from their cabin ; and once, very late at night, while gazing at a beautiful star in the west, that seemed to shine on my native shore, I heard voices from below, of such rich, melancholy, oppressive sweetness, that I almost thought as I listened the songs of spirits floated past me on the waters. A few nights after, as I was walking on deck, thinking of all I ever loved, my father and you, I heard a sudden shriek from the opposite side : I rushed forward, and

heard that some one had fallen overboard. The vessel was making rapid way ; I could hear or see nothing distinctly, but I plunged overboard in a moment." Connal pressed his brother's hand with the silent gratulation of a brave spirit. " The object I had rescued was the daughter of the Italian lady, but the attendants crowded round us, and she was taken from my arms the moment I reached the vessel. I then hurried to my cabin, where, without taking off my drenched clothes, or swallowing the spirits the sailors pressed on me, I sat for hours thinking on the burthen my arms had just relinquished : it was but for a moment, and in the darkness and struggle I had scarce seen her ; but I thought the hand I held for that moment was the coldest, softest, whitest thing I ever felt or saw ; and the face, as it lay on my breast for a moment, by the light of a common lantern, it seemed to have nothing like life in it, but nothing in life ever

was so lovely: When I thought of that hand touching mine, of that face resting on my bosom, a strange kind of trembling seized me: sometimes I wished the whole scene would occur again, and sometimes I wished it had never occurred at all.

"The next and for several days I was in a fever, but it was more of mind than body: every day messages of inquiry came from the Italian lady, and when I recovered, a monk, whom I had seen among her attendants, came to inform me that the signora wished to return her personal thanks to the preserver of her child. My breath seemed suspended while he spoke, and after some vain attempts to answer, I followed him to the signora's cabin; and though I was disappointed, I was relieved by finding her alone. She rose as I entered: she was an elegant, beautiful woman, no longer young, but possessing that grace of figure and address that belongs to foreigners of rank. I was going to speak

to her in Italian, of which I just knew the forms of salutation, when she suddenly addressed me in English, with a foreign accent indeed, but with the utmost fluency and elegance. Blushing at the praises she lavished on me, I at last summoned courage to inquire after her daughter.

"My son, sir," said the lady, "will never forget the obligations he owes you; and nothing distresses him more than his inability, from the consequences of the accident, to offer his personal thanks for his preservation; but he is a sickly, timid boy."

"I felt a strange oppressive sensation steal over me: I faltered out my regret for the indisposition of the young gentleman, and after some vain attempts to continue the conversation, I retired to my cabin."

"And saw them no more?" said Connal.

"No. The following day we landed,

and though I understood from the attendants that the signora was going to Ireland, we separated immediately on debarking, and I saw them no more."

"Then think of them no more," said Connal, who wished to avert his brother's mind from dwelling on a romantic impression.

"Oh! Connal, Connal," said Desmond, passionately, "I shall think for ever of that moment when I held that form in my arms, so pale, so soft, so motionless, and believed it a woman's: the object of that moment, and the Italian boy, appear to me two distinct beings, nor can I reconcile the images of my fancy with the sound, 'it is my son!' You who are too pure and too proud for passion, who have lived secluded from women, and never knew the sweet madness of their influence, I cannot explain myself to you; but if you should see Armida Fitzalban, who is now so near you, my lan

guage would be no longer unintelligible."

"I have seen her," said Connal.

"And what do you think of her?" said Desmond, eagerly.

"Why should I think of her?" said Connal, evading the question: "they say she is the proudest of her sex: a woman mad with pride, and abused capacity—that believes the world made only to worship her beauty, or her talents. A thousand times rather would I encounter that proud English peer her father, than meet her in her pride."

"But is not she the most beautiful creature you ever saw?" said Desmond.

"I hardly looked at her."

"But is not her voice music?"

"I scarce heard her speak."

"Gracious heaven! but is not she a woman, and is there not delight in the very sound. Since I held that figure in

my arms, I think I have loved the whole sex."

"Romantic boy!" said Connal, half sighing; "but with you love is combined with hope and honour—women love the brave, and young, and eminent. None of those bright visitors must come where O'Morven buries his blasted youth and ruined fortunes, amid the fragments of his paternal home."

"Connal, Connal, have I grieved you by my folly?" said Desmond, penitently.

"No, my affectionate boy: I sigh not to be the slave of either man or woman. But, oh God! no arms, no fame, no hope, for me." He darted from his brother as he spoke, and Desmond, who dared not follow him, returned to the castle, as the morn was breaking through the grey clouds that hung on the shore.

CHAP. V.

"He dies and makes no sign."

ARMIDA was awake the next morning by her servants, who, throwing open the curtains with looks of terror, exclaimed that Lord Montclare had passed the night in agonies, and was now dying. Armida waited not to hear them finish the sentence: screaming, and almost mad with horror, she threw on a loose dress, and flew to her father's apartment; but he gave positive orders that none but his attendants should be admitted till the physician's arrival, and he knew whether it would be safe for him to see his family. Accustomed to this exclusion, it gave her no additional pain, and she now hurried through the castle to dispatch servants in every direction for physicians, though

almost with a doubt whether any could be found in a country so savage. In the dreadful interval that preceded their arrival Armida was almost in despair ; between her and her father there had never subsisted either the affection of a parent or the confidence of a child ; but he had been indulgent to her even to profusion, and his sudden danger, combined with the desolateness of her situation, and the reflexion that her talents, though they gratified his pride, had seldom been exerted for his pleasure, were almost too much for a mind hitherto untried by calamity : at length the expresses that had been dispatched to Galway and Loughrea returned, accompanied by the physicians : They remained for two hours with their patient. Armida walked up and down the gallery in silence, dying to listen, but starting from the door whenever she heard an articulate sound ; at length they came out, and she saw her father's death in their countenances. To

the inquiring agony of her silence they could only answer that Lord Montclare's disease was the gout ; that in consequence as it appeared of some violent emotion of mind, it had been driven into his stomach ; that he was in imminent danger, and the sooner he saw his family and settled his worldly concerns the better.

Armida rushed into her father's apartment, which she never quitted till his sufferings caused her to be carried from it senseless : it was at this moment she felt the value of Rosine's inferior character, while the very impetuosity of her feeling made her mistake every order and confuse every medicine. Rosine with steady gentleness palliated the patient's sufferings even to himself, soothed his impatience, controuled the distraction of the attendants, and repressed the execrations that pain every moment forced from his lips : the paroxysm at length ended in a deep sleep, such as in those cases often precedes the approach of death.

Rosine was by his bed when he awoke; slowly raising his heavy eyes to her, he demanded—Were they come?

"The physicians, my lord, are still here," said Rosine.

"I need no physician," said Lord Montclare, "they can do nothing for me now. I want to see those I have injured."

Rosine, believing this to be delirium, was silent.

"Where is Armida? Let her come to me," he continued, "I wish to tell her all."

"Perhaps your lordship had better wait till they arrive," said Mr. O'Morven, who appeared to understand him.

"No, now or never," said the dying man; "I have wound myself up to it; let me tell it while I live; I will have no tales of me when I am gone."

Rosine was then dispatched for Armida, who hastened to his apartment, but before she arrived he was senseless. Ro-

she had forbore to mention his mysterious expressions ; yet a weight she could not describe pressed on her heart, and she was involuntarily convinced that her father's death would be attended with some terrible discovery.

Sick with unpeakable forebodings, on returning to her apartment she threw open her casement for air, and sat beside it breathless with fear and fancy. It was now night ; all below was dark and still ; nothing was heard but the light tread of a domestic, or a sound that from time to time she imagined to be the means of her father. About midnight she was startled by the sound of carriages, horses, and attendants, rapidly driving into the court of the castle ; her casement looked into it, and expecting the arrival of more physicians, she leaned forward : by the light of the flambeaux, with which the court was now illuminated, she saw alight from one of the carriages Father Moresini, who had left

them some months before they quitted England ; and from another two figures whom she could not distinguish ; a third carriage was full of female servants ; and a number of attendants, who appeared to be foreigners, followed them into the castle. The sound of many steps was heard passing to Lord Montclare's apartment ; the door was then shut, and total silence followed. No one came near Armida, who, though wondering, was too weak to make inquiries, and two hours elapsed before she was again summoned to her father. When she entered he was alone ; physicians, attendants, all had retired : the lights were dim, and the dreadful silence made her almost think it the chamber of death.

“ Come near, Armida, I have a secret to disclose,” said Lord Montclare ; “ I wish you to hear it from no other lips than mine while they can utter it : you have seen me for years the victim of its concealment, and I feel I shall not long

survive its disclosure. I have already told you I had two sisters; the younger is the mother of Colonel Wandesford, the elder irreparably offended me by marrying that beggarly Irishman who is now my agent. I married in Italy—married without any object but that of excluding the O'Morvens from the property which must have reverted to them in the event of my having no son. I had no affection for the unhappy woman I married, she was merely the instrument of my hatred against the O'Morvens: it has recoiled upon myself."

He wiped the cold drops from his face and proceeded.

"You were my first child, and after you I had several daughters, who all died in their infancy. When nine years had elapsed, frantic with my disappointment, I conceived the idea of confining my wife in some obscure place, spreading the report of her death, and forming another connexion. By the assistance

of Morosini, a crafty and avaricious priest, I executed part of my plan; but scarce had the report of Lady Montclare's death been diffused, when I was informed she was with child, and in a few months afterwards she was delivered in her retreat of a son. My misery was now completed by the very event to which I had looked as the sum of my hopes, for how could I acknowledge my heir without acknowledging my crime? Determined to do both, I yet, with the natural irresolution of guilt, deferred it from year to year, and wandered from place to place, in the hope of finding some spot where my character would not be blasted by the disclosure: at length my agent, Morosini, began to threaten me: I flew from Italy, but he followed me to England; there your cousin Wandesford proposed for you: you may remember the eagerness with which I pressed you to accept him; it was because I had disclosed my secret to him, for I

wished to secure a witness to the identity of my son, if, as I believed, I should not survive the recognition myself. Goaded by my conscience, my broken health, and the harassings of Morosini, I determined on burying myself in Ireland, and making the discovery in a country where I was little known, and where the judgment of my character was indifferent to me from my contempt for its inhabitants. Here therefore I came, but when I heard Lady Montclare and her son were arrived, that I must avow myself a villain, my sufferings reduced me to the state you see."

"And are they then arrived?" said Armida.

"They are," said her father; "but is it possible that you, who believed yourself my sole heiress, can hear of their arrival with joy?"

"Oh, my dear father," said the high-souled Armida, "how little do you know my heart."

Her tears appeared to affect and con-

vince her father, and he said feebly :—
“ I have studied hearts too little ; yet there are some noble ones in the world. That young O’Morven, the boy to whom I gave the commission, and who was involved in the hatred I felt against his family, he is a good young man—he saved your brother’s life on his passage to England. He little knew he was preserving the only life that stands between his family and their inheritance. He will be a witness, and you, and Wandesford : but he has much to encounter. I dread that old savage, with his pride, and rage, and poverty ; and I dread more the low villainy of Randal O’Morven : but I am exhausted, and, oh ! if this should be death.”

He sunk back.

“ Let me support you, my dearest father,” said Armida.

“ No, let me support him,” exclaimed a foreign voice, and Lady Montclare rushed into the room, with her son, the

priest, and young O'Morven. "My mother!" cried Armida, bewildered with joy and terror.

The awful circumstances under which they met chilled the energy of their feeling, and the mother and children embraced in solemn silence. Lord Montclare then desired to be supported in his bed, to acknowledge his wife and son, and call on the trembling witnesses to attest the recognition.

"And to you, Desmond," he added, trying to raise his hollow voice, "to you I commit this boy. Will you be his protector? Will you defend him if fraud——"

"With my life," replied Desmond, extending his arm over the youth, who knelt beside the bed, passive and almost senseless from timidity or surprise.

Yet when Desmond spoke, he parted the dark locks that clustered on his forehead, and looked up at him for a moment with an expression that

almost breathed the sublimity of devotion.

"Oh! Desmond," said the dying father, "remember your promise. He is a stranger. He has none near him but women, and I fear enemies. Endymion, embrace your cousin, and ask his protection. Desmond, will you not turn to him?"

Desmond, blushing at the appeal, leaned towards Endymion, to whom however he could not raise his eyes: but when he felt those slender arms twined round him once more; when he felt that bosom sinking on rather than pressed to his, and that face hiding itself on his neck, while the rich locks of which he had so often thought touched his cheek, he felt a strange sensation: he shuddered: he wished to shrink from Endymion and from himself; but his emotion was unnoticed, for Lord Montclare's groans drew every one in terror to the bed. The priest crossed himself; Lady Mont-

clare screamed aloud ; and his children sunk on their knees beside him. He raised his ghastly face from the pillow.

"Aye, this will have me," he cried, "this will have me. Theresa, am I forgiven? Hold me! hold me strongly! I am not dead yet—not yet! Oh, keep me back but for a moment."

Armida heard no more.

CHAP. VI.

ON quitting her apartment for the first time, several days after, Armida found a total change had taken place in the castle. The Irish and English servants had been all dismissed, and their places filled by the foreign domestics who had accompanied Lady Montclare: a general air of constraint pervaded the whole household. Father Morosini appeared the major-domo again. Mr. O'Morven retained the situation of agent, and Desmond, to whom Lady Montclare was lavish in her professions of gratitude, was entreated to continue an inmate of the castle while his regiment remained in its neighbourhood; and but for those persons who were lately so indifferent to her, Armida would have believed herself among total strangers. Her mother, to

whom she had at first flown with all the energy of her disposition, received her indeed with the most fascinating sweetness; but it was that kind of sweetness which we practise towards an enemy we want to circumvent or disarm, rather than a child whom we love. Her brother, the most pensive and dejected boy that ever lived, she did not feel herself much attracted by, and if she had, he was so watched by his mother and Morosini, that the least intercourse between them was utterly impossible. Chilled and disappointed, Armida resigned herself almost to solitude; and one evening as she sat in her lonely apartment, Lady Montclare entered eagerly—"My dear Armida, I have charming intelligence for you: Colonel Wandesford is in Ireland, he will be here to-night."

Before she could answer, the tumult in the castle announced the arrival of Wandesford. With all her pride and insensibility, Armida trembled, and the

tone in which she inquired if it were necessary that she should see him that night betrayed all the depression of her heart. But Lady Montclare was resolved not to permit her to retreat, and in a few moments Armida found herself in the presence of Wandesford. He immediately flew to her with the most rapturous vehemence, and before she could even reach the seat which her faltering steps were seeking, persecuted her for a verbal and immediate confirmation of his hopes with such importunity, that Armida, shocked, harassed, and abashed, again repeated her promise, and appealed to Lady Montclare for its confirmation. She then pleaded her recent calamity as an excuse for retirement, and returned to her apartment.

The following evening Armida and Rosine wandered out on the rocks; Wandesford soon followed them, and Armida, though she saw his approach with reluctance, tried to conceal it, and pointed

out some of the striking and original scenery around, perhaps to draw his attention from herself. Wandesford could not help allowing its wild, Salvator beauty, but he spoke the cold, technical language of a man whose claims to taste were derived only from his having been abroad. Armida in vain tried to communicate to him some of the enthusiasm, the *dulcia vitia* of her mind. Wandesford, after whistling vacantly for a moment, observed the extraordinary effect of the echo among those rocks, and coldly importuned Armida to sing for him.

"Ah! it is impossible," said she, "to make an effort that demands sensibility and imagination, while conscious that they do not exist within you, or within those who listen to you: I cannot sing in this cold climate. I require to be surrounded, as I once was, with groves of orange, wakened into fragrance by the breeze, and touched with the magic of moonlight, every pause filled with the

murmur of waters, or the sighs of silent delight. Oh! then I have felt the inspiration of music: then I have resigned my whole soul to sounds, which, but for their effect, I was scarce conscious I uttered: then I have breathed notes that never will be heard from these lips again."

"But I was never more prepared to admire and to enjoy than at this moment," said Wandesford.

"When we prepare for the reception of pleasure," said Armida, "pleasure never arrives. Recollect any moment of exquisite enjoyment, and you will find it has had as little resemblance to the moments that preceded it as the meteor to the cloud that it brightens for an instant. A few fugitive notes breathed in a sudden pause; an impassioned sentiment suggested by a withering flower, or an evening cloud; an unfinished picture with some brilliant touches that make you think it will be more than perfect when finished, and hide from you that its principal charm

is its being unfinished—these are the true sources of pleasure: in whatever pleases man there must be something that resembles his nature, something imperfect, that awaits a fuller development."

Yet when she had uttered her feelings, she was so startled by the angry gloom of Wandesford's countenance, that she dispatched Rosine to the castle for her lyre, an instrument which was constructed by her order from the model of one found in Herculaneum, and on which she used to accompany herself in the open air: but the cold and solitary praise of Wandesford, the mournful echoes of the shore, and the rude breath of an autumnal blast scattering her fine notes on the desert rocks, formed such a contrast to her former destiny, that, after a few bars, she paused; her hand faltered on the strings, and she bowed her head to conceal the tears that fell on them. Wandesford, always incensed at whatever interrupted

his own indulgence, walked sullenly away. Armida remained alone with Rosine: neither of them spoke: no words could have conveyed their feelings so strongly as their mutual silence. At length Armida caught up the neglected lyre, and under that impulse which genius derives from grief, and which, though not the happiest, is the strongest it can feel, she struck a few chords. The notes were at first few and interrupted, but as she sung, she mingled with them an expression that at once conveyed the brilliancy of her former destiny, and her present desolation. There is a tone in music that has the power of conveying beyond language this contrasted feeling to the heart, where the dying sweetness of past recollection softens while it exalts present sufferings. As she proceeded, and the consciousness of excellence gave energy to her tones, there was a melancholy triumph in them that seemed to say—"My talents are not lost, though

they are no longer admired." A sigh, that did not proceed from Rosine, made her pause: she turned, she looked upward, and the figure that she beheld bending over her made her silent from wonder. It was that of a young man whose strength and stature rose almost to the gigantic, yet retained so much youthful facility, and harmonious modulation, that it seemed rather to constitute a new order of human architecture than to depart from ordinary dimensions. He wore the ancient Irish dress: it consisted of (1) drawers of a vivid yellow, closely adapted to the limbs, and terminating in buskins, whose complicated braids gave to the feet and ankles the appearance of those of an ancient statue. The vest (the *fillan* of the ancient Irish) was of the same colour and texture, and clasped at the throat with a triangular broach. The mantle of regal purple, flowing back from one broad shoulder, displayed an arm that seemed formed to bear the ensigns of war

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or empire: the other arm, carelessly wrapped in the folds of his mantle, held the ancient Irish barret cap. But of the countenance, Armida, though she looked up only for a moment, felt that a single view was enough to stamp an everlasting impression: it was one of which the perfect and regular beauty was lost in the expression. Less depth of thought, less darkness of melancholy, less wild and romantic sublimity of expression, would have allowed more pleasure in the contemplation of features, whose symmetry, combined with a deep brown complexion, made them resemble the bust of a classic hero. His upper lip, was darkened by the hair which the ancient Irish suffered to grow there, and his hair, closely cut behind, so as to display the fine contour of the head and neck, whose very bend seemed to denote a proud submission, poured all its dark and wavy volumes to the front, and parting on the marble forehead terminated in the *coulin*—the long,

loose curl, so much the favourite of the ancient Irish, while its clustering ringlets, shading the temples, and wandering on the cheek, seemed like foliage mantling over the polished surface of a pillar—it was Connal O'Morven. He was bending over her as she sung with close attention, and as she turned, his face was irradiated with a sudden blush that proved it capable of every expression. Armida trembled in every limb at his presence with a terror she could neither repress or describe; but pride supplied the place of self-command, and she continued to sit, and even to touch her lyre, though her disobedient fingers could not produce a distinct sound. There was a mutual pause, till Connal, with a sigh like that with which we wake from a delicious dream, was slowly retiring, when, struck by the silence of Armida and Rosine, he murmured an apology for his intrusion. Armida, ashamed of her embarrassment

in the presence of a savage Irishman, coldly answered there was none.

"Yes," said Connal, his character invincibly breaking out, "yes, I am an intruder, for on no spot of these alienated grounds have I a right to set my foot; yet I have wandered here every evening to behold you, and when at a distance I saw your drapery like a cloud enshrouding some bright spirit—at a distance I gazed and worshipped. But those sounds: oh! what mortal could resist them: I followed them till I knew not where I was."

"Can you then admire Italian music?" said Armida, with surprise.

"I know not, for I cannot yet believe the sounds I heard to be mortal," said Connal.

"Yet there are times when even Italian music sinks under my conceptions of the power of music," said Armida, on whom the feeling of her altered destiny rushed sadly.

"I cannot feel its defects," said Connal, "for I have heard it only from your lips."

"I have sometimes thought," said Armida, "it wanted the power of exciting the melancholy, the deep and troubled feeling that is a source of the most exquisite pleasure. To a few, Italian music, as I have sometimes heard it sung by a pale, seductive, languishing Italian, fainting under a perfumed and glowing sky, and sighing forth sounds that seemed the natural language of the climate, the very spirit of the warm, voluptuous air, such music is perhaps the music of the senses; but I want the music of the heart: such music gives all the pleasures of sound, but I want its pains."

"Oh, heaven!" said Connal, touched by her language, "why have you not heard the native music of Ireland? Oh! there is a wildness, a passion, a tone of the heart in it that you have sought, and but in it you will seek in vain: they

have little of the art, but all the soul of that exquisite science of which you appear the visible deity."

Armida listened with incredulous contempt, and she spoke disdainfully of the sounds she had heard from the peasants of Ireland.

"It is the fate of the Irish language and Irish music," said Connal, "to be degraded into the language and music of the vulgar, and when we hear it from their lips we forget that it has been the language of the hero, the noble, or the poet. For eight hundred years the harmony of her language has ceased, for those who gave it harmony are no more: her chiefs, her bards, and her minstrels are gone. Her language, proscribed by England, and forgotten by herself, is now only the language of mendicants; and in its day of degradation we dare to pronounce what it has been, when inspired by genius, and modulated by harmony."

Armida, astonished at opinions heard for the first time, was yet more astonished at feeling herself awed by the mild but resistless firmness of manner with which they were uttered. Accustomed only to obsequious concessions or extravagant praises, she felt embarrassed; but she tried to collect her ideas, to put the vast forces of her mind in motion, yet her vindication of Italian music was feebler than she imagined.

While she spoke she often paused, and often faltered from a diffidence she had never felt in the crowded circles she had been accustomed to speak before; and when he answered, she felt that tones so rich, so broken, so pleading, might more than atone for the offence of resisting her darling opinions. She tried to listen, that she might refute; but her determination was lost in the thought that she had never beheld such a countenance as that which was now turned on her, and in

wonder how the mild and moon-like lustre of the effulgent eyes that were raised to her's could at once be so soft and so oppressive. Of all he said she only retained the last sentence—"all other music is the production of science : Irish music is the effusion of passion, and of the heart : our dirges were composed by bards, who hung round the body of their chief : our war-songs, amid the rage of a battle on which the fate of the minstrel and of his country hung, often amid the death-shock into which the minstrel himself, smote with the madness he inspired, has plunged, and mingled the last sounds of his harp with his own : our love songs were composed in the very presence of the beauty they praised ; and oh! who," said Connal, "can imagine the inspiration of such a presence. This is a difference which affects the very nature and spirit of music : it is not the cold and laboured imitation of something the

minstrel never felt: it is the rich and rapt effusion of a burdened spirit, tortured with the fulness of its conceptions, over-informing the medium through which it pours them, and by its inspirations forcing it to represent them with a terrible fidelity that makes the auditors tremble."

As he spoke of Irish music his habitual gloom was gone: his melancholy seemed for a moment to take a glow from his passions, like a dark evening cloud tinged by the setting sun.

Armida no longer contended; but still jealous of her superiority, she called on him to justify his praises of Irish music, and offered him her lyre. Connal took it with the air of one who was above the trifling of importunity. His touch proved him a master of it; and he sung the Irish air of "The summer is coming," with the Irish words. The sounds he uttered had more affinity to

the murmur of the brook or the breeze than to any music she had ever heard. He sung with the passionate melancholy, the wild, fugitive cadences, the troubled pausings, the deep, low, and lengthened cadence of an Irish song : it seemed like the very groans of music.

Armida walked to a distance to hide the tear which her pride and her science alike condemned.

"What is the matter with me?" said she mentally, "am I listening with anguish and delight to the song of a savage Irishman, a native of this abhorred country, where I have been buried? It must be the dejection of indolence, of my neglected talents: I am growing wild in solitude: Oh! that he could see me as I once was!"

That moment it occurred to her that she had promised to shew Wandesford her paintings the following evening, and an irresistible wish to dazzle the proud Milesian with the display of her talents seized her.

She turned to Connal the full lustre of her looks; these looks the expression of which had always been equal to a command, and uttered a wish that he should visit the castle the following evening.

“ My harp and my paintings are there. Like the prophet in the Old Testament I will offer upon every altar I used to frequent, and invoke the power which has forsaken me so long : if he descends, you shall hear all he inspires.”

It was now twilight, and she did not observe the agitated expression of Connal's countenance, till he falteringly answered :

“ Must I visit the castle of my ancestors, to forget, while listening to you, that it is lost to me for ever !”

The trembling and impassioned tone of these words could not hide from her the haughtiness of soul that dictated them. The proud blood of Armida

rushed into her face : she drew her veil over her burning cheek, and taking the arm of Rosine, turned haughtily away.

CHAP. VII.

I loved thee well, but yet I wooed thee not.

BRAUMONT and FLETCHER.

THE whole of the following day Armida passed in an apartment which her father had ordered to be built on her arrival ; but when it was filled with her paintings, her statues, and her music, she had only to sit down and sigh amid those memorials of a brilliant existence which seemed like that of a dream : obscurity and oblivion had stolen over the ornaments of her cabinet, and over the highly-gifted mind that had adorned it. She had not entered it for some time previous to her father's death, and she now did so with a feeling she could not account for. Her ambition, her wish to excel and to delight, had returned as if by enchant-

ment; but with them came a diffidence, an anxiety to please, such as she had never felt before.

When Rosine entered the apartment in the evening she was employed in giving a few touches to a picture, which in subject and colouring so much resembled one in the neighbourhood of the castle, that Rosine remarked it, and added a romantic wish she had once heard Connal utter, that some spirit of the air would hang a thin wreath of clouds on the summit of a rock that stood crect and bare in the centre of the view.

Armida, silently pursuing her task, mantled the peak over with a vapour of the most orient and fantastic hues.

"Do you think he will come?" said she at length.

"Colonel Wandesford? He has not quitted the castle all day," said Rosine.

"I do not mean him," said Armida, "I mean the brother of Desmond."

"Did he not decline coming to the castle?" said Rosine.

"True, true," replied Armida; and she bowed her burning cheek over the painting. "Let him stay and solace himself at home with the mouldering portraits of his Milesian ancestry."

"Oh! Armida," said Rosine, "how can you speak so contemptuously of a man struggling so nobly with his fallen fortune, and all its humbling and bitter inflictions."

"Tell me not of his virtues," said Armida: "tell me of his haughtiness, his sullenness, his visible contempt of me: I felt them all," she added, rising from her seat. "How is it possible I should not hate that man?"

"My dear Armida," said Rosine, whose eyes began to be opened, "I neither wish you to hate or love him; but are there not many whom one may approve, or barely tolerate?"

"And do you think," said Armida,

turning the full lustre of her eyes on Rosine, "do you think that Connal O'Morven is a character to be barely tolerated? I feel he must be either loved or hated."

"A detached figure always appears striking," said Rosine; "but should you meet him in the world ——"

"I tell you I never met any thing like him in the whole world," said Armida.

"And can you," said Rosine, "accustomed to the polish of courts, prefer the singularities of one reared in solitude and indigence?"

"Your language is harsh, Rosine," said Armida, casting down her eyes.

"I only repeat what I have heard you say of his whole nation," said Rosine.

"But that was before I saw him," answered Armida, sinking into a reverie.

Rosine reminded her it was time to dress, for she had on only the loose robe she wore in the morning.

"No," said Armida, pensively; "I

have a superstitious preference for this dress.—Did'nt I wear this last night ?”

“ I believe so,” said Rosine ; “ and at times I thought I never saw you look so beautiful.”

“ Then no matter how I look to-night ;” and she walked to the glass, and gazed at herself for a moment with a look in which a proud consciousness of beauty was mingled for the first time with that timidity which is inseparable from a solicitude to please.

The family now entered the cabinet, and Armida, flushed, trembling, and dishevelled, advanced to meet them ; but trembling, flushed, and dishevelled as she was, never had she looked so lovely. Her loose black dress, thrown on without care, and still retained from a partial consciousness of the touching and indefinite shade it gave her figure, was utterly at variance with the quick and trembling animation of her movements ;

and her downcast eyelids, that seemed sinking under the weight of some unseen object, had an expression quite different from that of the bright and almost sparkling crimson that dyed her cheek so deep.

Wandesford, her mother, the elder O'Morven, and the priest, gazed on the paintings, and while they lavished praises on them and their artist, who heard them with indifference, Connal entered alone. Dazzled by the blaze of intellectual luxury which the apartment displayed, he for a moment forgot every thing but the brilliant enchantress before him, and the fairy palace she had raised and embellished : but he was soon recalled by the reception he met. The strangers stared : Wandesford visibly frowned ; and his father, who felt an emotion of shame at the sight of his neglected child, slightly said :

“ You are such a stranger here.”

"I feel I am," said Connal, with that mixture of mild and proud dejection that marked his character.

Armida was pointing out one of her pictures to Wandesford: every one pressed forward to view it. Connal alone stood apart: he was gazing on the beautiful arm that held back the curtain suspended over it; so white, so undulating, it seemed like a marble ornament attached to its folds. The pride of the woman and the artist contended in the bosom of Armida.

The subject of the painting was Alexander weeping at the tomb of Achilles. Wandesford talked profusely of the mild and mellow brilliancy of the lights that were poured on the picture. Armida looked down: she was more desirous of the praise of sentiment than execution.

"By that extended arm," said Connal, "that seems to supplicate the light to stay, did you not mean to tell the anguish of ambition at the recollection that

mortal triumphs are but for a day, and that when a few more suns had set the tomb of Alexander would be like that of Achilles, defaced and unknown ?”

Armida, whose eyes flashed with the triumph of vindicated genius, turned the full moon-tide effulgence of her beautiful countenance on Connal, and taking a rose from her hair, offered it to him, with a wish that it was the golden violet with which the bards of Provence were rewarded.

“ How difficult,” she added, “ it is sometimes to be understood.”

Connal took the rose without speaking, but he bowed as he received it, not with the slight reverence of modern courtesy, but with the deep inclination of an eastern slave.

When he raised his head, the long tresses of the *coulis* had fallen over his cheek ; but its burning hue could be seen through its curls.

A few moments afterwards the party

was struck by the sound of music issuing from a recess before which a curtain hung. It was withdrawn: within was a pavilion, built to catch a picturesque view of the shore. There was no light in it except what was poured in by the bright full-moon that shone just opposite the open casement. The walls were hung with velvet, covered with exquisite paintings from the antique; but the forms and colours were mixed in a kind of shadowy repose. A transparent painting hung over the upper part of the casement, and the roses that clustered without sent in their fragrance, and their flowers, tinged with moonlight, through the pillars that supported it. It was open, and beyond it were seen the full glory of the moonlight sea, the aërial rocks, and the blue, breathless sky: but within there was something still more lovely.

Armida, who had quitted the room a few moments before, was extended on a couch

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with her harp beside her. Her white arms hung over the strings ; her eyes turned to the casement, as if she was unconscious there was a spectator near her ; but she was not ; her burning cheek, her attitude, her wild, ærial, yet melancholy beauty, shewed that she had fixed on that moment to display all the wonders of her art. Her mourning dress was exchanged for an azure robe ; her arms were bare, and some wandering ringlets of hair were all that shaded her bosom : her dark hair, divided on her forehead, whose whiteness gleamed like that of a star, was fastened by a crescent of sapphire. Her dress, in that visionary light, seemed more like a cloud, a vapour stealing round and enshrouding her, than like mortal vesture : her form was that of some attendant spirit of the night, who had glided to earth on a beam of the moon, and was looking upward for her native sphere ; yet, when one viewed her steadily, there was a flush, a trembling, a touch of mortality in her

expression that made her still more lovely ; and her faint, ethereal garb was strongly contrasted by the vivid crimson of her cheek, and the lustre of her eyes, almost the only objects visible in that pale light.

Every one was silent, and Armida sung. She had struck a few notes to call their attention, and she now sung one of the most soft and simple airs she could recollect, and, as if her fingers touched the harp involuntarily, a chord broke from it from time to time, among whose deep and numerous murmurs her voice seemed lost for a moment. Her voice had not its usual strength : it had the rich trembling of passion : conscious of her powers, and feeling that the present moment developed them all, she gave up her whole soul to song. She devoted herself with the impetuosity, the " sweet madness " of her mind to the object of subduing and enslaving one whose superior form and mind seemed to bid defi-

ance to her talents and her beauty: such as she was that moment, her powers all awake, and blazing round her like points of light, and softened by a sentiment that gave its own rich languor to her attractions, she was "too bright for sense," and she had placed herself in the magic of moonlight, for she knew that over melancholy minds that hour has a power that commands all their tides of feeling. When her song ceased, the rest crowded into the pavilion; Connal alone remained behind. Her eye, wandering over every other figure, sought for his: she saw him when alone take from his bosom the rose which she had given him and press it to his lips. At that moment she perceived it was black: it was one of the mourning flowers which she had worn the early part of the evening in her hair: her spirits, strongly excited, were overpowered by this trivial circumstance: she burst into tears.

Connal, at the sound of her voice, en-

tered the pavilion : she did not attempt to hide her tears, for she knew they increased her beauty.

“ When I am exhausted by music,” said she, “ nothing relieves me so much as tears.”

“ And you who can feel the soul of song,” said Connal, “ can you not sing Irish music ? Oh, sing one Irish song for me.”

She felt her power in those accents, and she was determined to triumph in it.

“ Not here,” said she ; “ this place was made for other sounds : this foliage, these paintings, reflect the voluptuous light of an Italian bower : they breathe the luxurious languor of Italian moonlight : if I sing Irish music, it shall be amid scenes suited to it, on a crag of yonder rock, with the waves murmuring at my feet, and the wind moaning through the strings of my harp. Can you carry it so far ?” she added, smiling.

Connal took the harp, with a face elo-

quent with delight : he uttered but two words :—“ Armida ! Enchantress ! ” and Armida, who had been accustomed to the epithet, did not inquire why it gave her a sensation she had never felt before. She was advancing to a door which opened on a flight of natural steps that led to the shore, when Lady Kilcarriek stopped her. This had been a most irksome night ; she did not understand paintings ; she did not like music ; but when she heard Irish songs spoken of, she thought she might declare her approbation of what she knew. She immediately followed Armida.

“ You think me devoid of taste, and so I am perhaps ; I pretend to nothing, but I know what I like, and I like what I understand. Do now, Miss Fitzalban, sing me one good song, it’s worth all the foreign screaming in the world.”

At the words “ foreign screaming, &c.” Armida, casting a look of horror at the petitioner, hurried from the pavilion.

"How can you bear those things so calmly?" said she to Connal, who she knew would follow her.

"We must bear with age and weakness," said Connal; "but at such a moment, the moment of inspiration, to be reminded of mortality by such a monitor—it is at such a moment we require it—oh, how much we require it at a moment like this."

"Your philosophy is enviable," said Armida, haughtily.

"It is at least necessary," said Connal, "for one like me. Does superior feeling bestow any thing but superior misery? Self-satisfied as that weak woman is, how much more so would she be, could she but look into a heart that is cursed with feeling. How would she mock its agony! but she cannot: that is at least the privilege of such a heart; a privilege, that before it parts with, it will break."

Armida was at once touched and indignant at this proud and melancholy mind.

Her wish to subdue it had become a passion ; she ceased to struggle with it ; she gave herself up to it, till the resolution appeared to her almost like a virtue. She seated herself on the rock, on which Connal had spread his mantle. The breeze lifted her long hair with a gentle motion : the moon, as the light clouds floated over it, touched her figure from time to time with a tremulous and indefinite light : one bright star was over her head ; she raised her white arm to it silently, and remained in that attitude, for she felt that Connal was gazing at her. She did not encounter his eye, but she heard him breathe only sighs, and she felt his bosom throbbing through her thin robe as he lay at her feet. That was the moment she chose for her song : it was an old Irish melody, most musical, most melancholy.

“ It was such a song, at such an hour,” said Connal, “ that brought the spirits of those he loved around the bard of old :

its virtue is not lost; there is not a thought I have ever loved, that does not visit my mind this moment, and make it feel like heaven."

Armida renewed her song, nor did she dare to ask herself why she felt more exquisite pleasure, seated on a rude rock on the shore of Ireland, and singing for a wild Milesian, than she had ever felt in the most brilliant circles in Italy.

Connal waved his arm, "All around me," said he, "was mine, as far as the moon lights those broken shores; as far as you see those isles like silver buds in the green floating field of ocean, all was mine; and that castle, whose towers are reflected in the wave that breaks at your feet, was the seat of my ancestors; the palace of princes, whose view only bounded their territory: that ruined hovel on the left is my residence now, and that dark speck of land behind, without tree or shrub on it, is all my land: the territory of O'Morven has shrunk to that

spot.—Yet, a moment past, and I forget all this ; and I feel that I could sit thus, on this rock, for ever forgetting our fallen house, forgetting the cold world, myself, every thing but you.” Armida

Busied herself the strings withal,
To hide the tear that fain would fall ;

and asked him faintly if her singing reminded him of his native music.

“ It reminds me of the strain the spirit of our ruined family is said to have poured into the ear of him who is about to die,” said Connal ; “ a strain so sweet, that the rapt wretch forgets it comes to warn him of woe and death.”

“ And does mine tell no more ?” said Armida, hiding her burning cheek on her harp.

“ Enchantress ! yes,” cried Connal, starting wildly from her feet, “ it tells me to fly from you for ever.”

Lady Kilcarrick, after her defeat, had gone to Lady Montclare, and half com-

plaining, half advising, entreated her not to let Miss Fitzalban remain so long in the night air. Lady Montclare, who saw the sullen anger of Wandesford, immediately followed her daughter; and with a smile, through the sweetness of which no one could discover hatred or suspicion, told her they had fed long enough on sound, and summoned them to the castle to partake of more substantial refreshment.

"Aye, dear Lady Montclare," said the dowager, "you are a comfortable, substantial creature, and I love every thing comfortable: all this wandering on rocks by moonlight is very fine to be sure, but I shall feel the effects of it in every bone in my body to-morrow."

As they returned to the castle, Armida paused to point out to Connal a rock, over which a stream was dashing in the moonlight, and she expressed a wish to visit it the following evening.

"We will bring an Eolian harp," said

she, "and its sounds, amid those shores, will recall the thoughts of other times."

"There is but one harp has that power," said Connal.

They entered the castle, and Wandesford, who had disdained to follow them, came up, and tearing off the mantle which Connal had thrown over Armida, exclaimed, dashing it on the ground:—

"How can you bury yourself in those cursed folds! you look like an Egyptian mummy with his hieroglyphics."

Armida, trembling at the insult, attempted to raise the mantle, and as Connal prevented her, said—

"I will return this, but I will keep the beautiful ornament that fastens it:—it looked like a fairy gem in the moonlight," and she tried to detach the crescent of gold and amethyst that clasped it on the shoulder. Connal eagerly assisted her: their hands touched each other. She raised her eyes with haughty pleasure to Wandesford; but the horrid smile

that divided his ashy lips, as he looked at them, made her start: but her pride was stronger than fears; and though she trembled, she said to Connal:—

“How can I deprive you of this valuable gem?”

“You have given me one ten thousand times more valuable,” said Connal, pointing to his bosom, where he had hid the rose. As he wrapt himself in his mantle, she gazed on his heroic figure and romantic dress with a pleasure which she believed the same a fine picture used to inspire; yet she felt that since she saw him pictures had become indifferent to her.

“We shall visit you to-morrow,” said she, as they parted. “I am told that you sit on a solitary rock, and count the isles scattered round you, like the guardian spirit of the Hebrides viewing the tributary saints of his domain.”

“And to-morrow,” said Connal, with unusual gaiety, “I shall count an angel among them.”

CHAP. VIII.

He called upon his saint, but not for life ;
For you, unhappy woman.

BEAUMONT.

In the course of the following day, Lady Kilcarrick completely succeeded in making good her quarters at the castle. Her gossiping officiousness and her rank were of use to Lady Montclare, who had every reason to strengthen her party in a country where she was only known as a stranger, arriving under mysterious circumstances ; and knew that those who would not think of examining papers and parchments would be satisfied by the report of her being visited by the rigid Lady Kilcarrick. But Lady Kilcarrick herself had much deeper plans in this visit : she wished to see how affairs stood

in this mysterious family ; and according to them to form a connexion for her grand-daughter, Lady Gabriella, with the young lord ; with Wandesford, whom she had no slight hope of detaching from Armida ; or even with Connal or Desmond, if she could succeed in exciting either of them to dispute the recent and dubious title of Endymion to the inheritance of their family. She submitted therefore to the polite importunities of Lady Montclare to make the castle her residence, till the carriage was repaired ; and she even accompanied the party the following evening, as they wandered on the rocks, to adjust her plan of operations. As Armida approached the rock she had promised to visit, the figure of Connal, standing in the rich glow of autumnal sun-set, and gazing with folded arms on the castle of his ancestors, appeared on its summit.

He seemed at that moment fit to lead
“ an host angelic, clad in burning arms.”

Armida, who saw him first, appeared to read his mind.

“Nothing but pride inhabits there,” said she, mentally: “he has no passions; he sees the seat of his family with emotion, but its inhabitants excite none: oh, that that proud form of his contained a mind less proud.”

She received him coldly; but when she heard the rich, firm music of his voice suddenly broken; when he turned from the rest to her; and the faltering tone in which he offered to assist her ascending the rock, she forgot every thing but his presence. She had wished to defer this walk till moonlight, and she said something faintly about its effect on the scenery.

“Oh,” said Connal, “it is the sweetest light; I always loved it, but I love it more than ever.”

Armida felt the meaning of these words, and she drew down her veil to hide its effects on her conscious cheek.

The rocky path suddenly wound round an angle, and the cavern, with the ocean rolling beneath, burst on them in all the light of sun-set. Armida, as she still held his arm, remembered the time when such a prospect would have suggested to her a flow of poetical sentiment and language that resembled inspiration. She wished to impress Connal with the powers she had formerly possessed ; but after some ineffectual attempts to recall them, she said in a broken voice, " I once had feelings, that, like flowers, bloomed in the air and sun ; but they have faded away. I believe I may say with Ophelia, —They all withered when my father died ;" and she wept, but not for her father.

" There are some relics of antiquity here," said Connal as they entered the cavern, " that go even beyond tradition. Do you see where those stones have been lately removed ? The other night an old harper came to my grandfather's door,

from which none of his brethren have ever been excluded at night : he played on his harp, and sung "snatches of old tunes," some of which made my heart burn within me : among the rest was one which told of a battle between two rival chiefs of our house fought on this shore ; they both fell, and were interred in a cave with all their armorial and princely insignia.

"My grandfather was roused by the tale, and he made the old man tell it again and again, till his aged faculties kindled with the feeling he awoke, and he declared, that though the tale had been told him when blind, the local description was so strong, that if he was led to the cave, he could point out where the corpses lay. We went by torch-light to the cave : some of the followers (I cannot call them servants, for their service is gratuitous) attended us. I held a torch near the old man ; it was an awful sight to see him, as the light glared on his pale

face and withered hands that were stretched out to feel for the spot he said he knew. The light fell on him alone--all the rest of the cavern was dark; at last he reached that mound: I toiled half the night to remove the stones that covered it."

"And did you remove those stones?" said Wandesford, pointing to the masses of rock that lay scattered round the cavern: "you must be devilish strong."

"I hoped to please my grandfather by my efforts," said Connal; "and my powers of body and mind have little other employment. Beneath those stones I discovered the skeletons: the dryness of the soil had preserved and bleached the bones; they appeared to have belonged to men of formidable size: there we found the weapons of the slain; and what delighted my grandfather still more, the regal ornaments of gold they wore on the day of battle. He added them to the vast collection of the relics of his house,

the only part of its wealth which remains to him, and one which he values more than all he has lost."

Armida wandered on : the melancholy awe of the place had breathed itself into her mind, but it was the melancholy of passion, mixed with its own peculiar pleasures. Far to the left there was a cavity, whose depth no eye could measure : unconsciously she had reached the very verge of it, and stood there with her ethereal form and light vesture, resembling the first bright fallen spirit on the brink of chaos. Connal, suddenly darting forward, and snatching her from it, exclaimed, " Why do you venture to the edge of that gulph : do you imagine, like Curtius's, it requires the most precious thing in the world to be thrown into it ? " Armida trembled between resentment and pleasure : she tried to extricate herself from his arms, but though his touch was as light as that of a spirit, she could not.

Desmond, who had followed them with Endymion, when he saw Connal throw his arms around Armida, struck by a contrast he dared not even name, rushed from the cave, and threw himself against a fragment of rock at its entrance. In a few moments the voice of Endymion, who had joined Armida in a few simple notes, which the echoes of the cave made like fairy music, reached him. He imagined he was listening again to the sweet song of the Italian girl, as it floated on the sea-blast sweeter than the mermaid's. He was startled from his dream by Endymion standing beside him: it was twilight, a few stars twinkled in the blue east; where the sun had set, a broad mass of sanguine vapour flushed the water with its deep dyes, and made it resemble a sea of blood. Endymion, after gazing on Desmond, as he leaned on the rock, and held up his burning cheek to the sea-breeze, while he felt no breeze could cool the fever that scorched it, approach-

ed him, and faintly asked if the singing had displeased him. "No," said the agitated boy, "it pleased me too much : I heard your voice."

"Oh that sensation," cried Endymion, "how often I feel it in your presence : at some moments, at the present, it almost deprives me of breath, of sense : it is a delight that makes me sick and giddy : the Italians, before an earthquake, have a sensation for which there is no name ; such is the sensation I feel in your presence, that I could throw myself into your arms and weep, if you would let me."

"Stop, stop," said Desmond, "talk this language no more : if the sight of each other be thus intoxicating, thus ruinous, let us part, and see each other no more."

Endymion wept.

"Oh torture me no more with this fantastic fondness," said Desmond, "so unlike what we ought to feel for each other : this female fastidiousness I cannot

bear. I wish to love you like a younger brother ; you treat me with the caprice of a mistress. Endymion, I cannot endure this. Never did I feel before these wild, these maddening sensations. I know not what you have done with me ; what strange influence you have obtained over me, but it is an influence that I must fly from to preserve my reason, my life."

" Oh ! do not, do not talk of going," said Endymion, ringing his hands in agony. " Am I so lost that I cannot love or be loved without being guilty : is my affection a crime, or a curse—why must I not love you ? It is so sad, none can envy me ; none shall ever see me." He whispered, " If you will sometimes let me twine those bright ringlets on my fingers, or gaze on you, when your eye is averted from me, or touch your hand when it is unconsciously suspended near me—and is that too much ; can you refuse me that ?"

"I can refuse you nothing, and therefore I must fly from you. I tried, but I cannot love you as a man: I know what it is to love a brother well; for Connal I would die, but for you, Endymion, I would live: live, in you, for you, in your sight: dream life away in voluptuous and frantic melancholy: the feelings that oppress, that soften, that sicken me, even now while I speak to you I cannot describe them; I must not feel them; no, not another moment. Oh! untwine those arms from me; you are making me wild; my blood burns like fire in my veins: do not believe these hot tears that drop on your hands: they are tears of hatred—hatred of myself and you."

"Oh, if you shed one tear I am happy," cried Endymion, clasping his hands with wild delight: "if you shed one tear you do not hate me."

"Oh! leave me," cried Desmond, breaking from him; "leave me, while I have sense left to tear myself away."

“If you drive me from you,” said Endymion, sadly quitting him, “if I am forbid to tell you what no words can tell, or to believe that I tell it in these sighs, I will tell it to the night and the stars; they are so calm and beautiful, they seem to listen, and to have compassion on me.”

He spread his hands to Heaven as he spoke.

“I call them to witness that I love you, that I will love you only, you for ever; that I am dying for love of you. Oh, while I leave you, and feel the rich and melancholy joy of uttering those words, I will not believe even you that I can be guilty, that there can be a crime in my love.”

He threw himself on Desmond: the light of the rising moon was reflected on his cold marble countenance; the tears stood congealed in his half-closed eyes; his hand, so lately trembling with agony, lay on Desmond's shoulder white and

motionless: he seemed, as he had said, dying of passion, and Desmond felt as if he held in his arms one who was no more. He restrained himself no longer.

"If that star," he cried, "and he who bids them shine, view my heart at this moment, they know its innocence and its agony; they know why I am thus urged to impossible passion, forced thus to tell you that I do love you, with a love passing that of women; but never shall those sounds pass my lips again. Oh! dry your tears, Endymion: am I not humbled enough? am I not as weak as you could wish me? Dry your tears, or I shall be more frantic, more guilty still. I have no strength while you weep thus helplessly on my neck. Are these tears of sorrow, Endymion?"

"Oh, no! pleasure so exquisite that I do not wish to survive it: no future moment of life can be like that in which you said, even amid trouble and anger,

'I love you!' and will you never utter it again?"

"I love you," repeated Desmond.

As he uttered these words a broad sheet of lightning quivered over the sea, and shewed the face of Endymion pale as that of the dead. He did not move, and Desmond for a moment believed him struck dead.

"Endymion," he cried, in a voice of terror, "did you see that dreadful flash?"

"Yes," murmured the entranced boy, "and believed that my wish was granted—to die in your arms."

A loud peal of thunder followed, and the dark clouds, amid which the sun had set, came rapidly on, spreading themselves over the sky, and quenching the stars that glittered over their heads. Desmond bore Endymion back to the cave, that seemed to rock to its recesses, as the thunder rolled above, and the waves, tormented by the storm, dashed

themselves against its rocks, and covered the wanderers with their spray. They were alone, but in spite of the terrors of the elements Desmond found that he dared not remain alone with Endymion, and in the first pause of the tempest he hurried him back to the castle: all there was confusion and distress; Armida, Wandesford, and Connal, had not yet returned, and Rosine mentioned that she had left them before the storm commenced, preparing to visit an island on the shore, and in an open boat.

“An open boat!” cried Desmond;
“and in such a night as this!”

And in spite of his father's intreaties, and the agony of Endymion's silent grasp, he rushed to the shore again: few of the servants followed him. They reached the cave with difficulty. The spectacle was tremendous. The rocks were covered with foam, that terribly contrasted the blackness of the raging waters, amid whose roar they could hard-

ly distinguish their own voices, but no other sound on earth.

Some fishermen came hurrying to the shore, but they declared it madness to venture out in a storm in which no boat could live.

"Give me an oar and I will go myself; I will go alone," cried Desmond, who with locked hands, and eyes hollow with agony, was bending from the rock: "Must I stand here and see my brother perish?"

"You must indeed," said one of the men, "for there they are; I see them myself."

"Impossible!" cried Desmond, wildly; "I must have seen them first myself."

At that moment the rain seemed to overcome the fury of the wind, and the latter blew with short and whistling gusts, and drove fast the scattering wrack across the moon, that pale, and, like a traveller, faint with fear, went on

her troubled way, now hid, and now shewing her discoloured face through the stormy clouds. In one of those glimpses Desmond saw distinctly the boat, with the figures in it, and saw that their danger arose not from the storm, but from the state of their boat, which seemed to be going in pieces before it was possible for them to get to shore. Nothing could now restrain him from venturing out to save them. One man alone consented to accompany him. The intrepid pair embarked, and the foam of the breakers soon hid them from the view of those who remained on the shore.

Armida, Connal, and Wandesford, had quitted the cavern together.

"You compared my singing last night," said she to Connal, "to that of the spirit who warns your family of approaching fate : was it an image of your fancy, or your national superstition ?"

"Of the latter," said Connal ; "a

superstition the most richly tinged with the mournful brightness of a poetical mind of any ever wove in fancy's loom. In Irish mythology every family is supposed to be attended by a visionary being, whose office is to predict the calamity or death of its members. She appears as an old woman sitting on the grave, or wandering near the house of the devoted family, and pouring out a stream of melancholy sound, half musical, half moaning, to summons the wanderer home. Her song is peculiar to Irish modulation, that can combine melody with the wildest tones of grief and passion. Such is the tale of the Benshi; it is, like her own music, pleasant and mournful to the soul. Men love to have the discovery of the other world softened to their minds, and never was the curtain of futurity drawn by so gentle a hand. Amid those ruins," he continued, pointing to an isle to which the rising moon gave all the dim and

aërial effect of vapour, "the spirit that attends our family is said to haunt."

"And why is she said to inhabit there?" said Armida.

"It is the burial-place of our family; and it only waits for a feeble old man, and two unknown young ones, to close on the last of the race, from whose graves no one will pluck a weed to discover the name they bore."

He paused, and added in a firmer voice:—

"On that isle the ruins of an abbey are still standing, surrounded by relics of high antiquity, pillars, crosses, and cromlechs, the memorials of an age in which the cross was yet unknown. Beneath the walls of its roofless chapel is the burial-place of our family, marked with the only traces of sculpture those ruins preserve. (2) The representations of the human frame are hard and uncouth, but our habits, our arms, our regal ornaments——"

He checked himself. Wandesford, in the absurd hope of detecting a boast in an account so simple, proposed visiting the island. They advanced to the shore: several boats were on the beach. The isle, with its pale ruins, glowed mildly beneath the moonbeam like fairy land.

"Let us visit them," said Armida, "by the setting sun. I love to see ruins on the sea-shore, rich with their dark green dyes, and mantled over with weedy clusters by that light."

"If thou wouldst view fair Melrose aright, go visit it by the pale moonlight," said Connal.

"Your's is the language of a painter, enamoured of lights and hues, but it is a scene to which I would rather bring my mind than my senses: a mind that when it visits the place of wonders, will not, like Alladdin in the tale, be content with the gems that sparkle there; but will seek the genius of the place, and learn his secret, and dwell with him

afterwards in the power and darkness of him that has mastered the spell."

They had reached the beach as he spoke, and Connal, well acquainted with the language of the clouds, suddenly leaped from the boat which he had towed round, and drew Armida away.

"There will be a storm," said he.

"And what if there is?" said Wandesford, who was proud of this temporary advantage: "we shall be at that rock you call an island and back again before it begins."

"I should not hesitate to accompany you, sir, any where," said Connal, "were it not for——"

"Are you afraid? sir," said Wandesford, provoked at the exception.

Connal made no answer but by leaping into the boat, and Armida followed him, for she wished to shew this son of the rocks and waves that she was no trifler, who shrunk from the elements. Connal, throwing back the mantle from his

shoulder, began to row, and Wandesford steered. Their passage was calm and rapid. Armida was silent as she listened to the measured dashing of the oars. The stillness, the solitude, the soft light, and smooth motion, gave her a new sensation—a sensation increased by the contrast between the towering majesty of Connal, and the humble employment he was engaged in for her. She watched his dark eye as it was raised to the clouds every moment, and the faint sultry blast blew his dishevelled hair over them, like clouds obscuring stars in a wintry storm. He hummed a song as he rowed, of which the sound, though inarticulate, was so mournful, that Armida started from the feeling it inspired, and hastened to a subject of conversation like those upon which she could once speak with eloquence. She spoke of the rosary of Biscayners, of the vesper-hymn of the Italian mariners, and of the chromatic chorus of the Chinese boatmen. Then

she mentioned the proceleusma of the ancients, and the high antiquity of naval music, of which she traced the origin to an imitation of the sounds that haunt the sea-shore: and she remarked the difference between the classical superstitions that strewed the surface of the deep with the most beautiful forms, and even supposed a sensibility of sound to exist in its inanimate inhabitants; (3) and the gloomy dreams of the northern sgeald, who pictured through the clouds and storms of his native sky the terrors of the griesly wasserman; or of the sea-snake, whose giant folds girdled the world.

She again reverted to the moonlight music she had heard trembling on the shores of Naples, and a tear trembled in her eye, that was awoke less by past than present recollections. Connal said he knew no appropriate naval music of the Irish.

“But the air,” said he, “you have

just heard, is one whose marked melancholy proves that it was no easy offspring of leisure and apathy: it was like most Irish music, composed under that strong impulse to which poetry and music both owe their existence: it is the cry of a wounded spirit that seeks in music the echo of its own sadness. During the many vicissitudes that our family underwent from the time of Cromwell to James, an old man, one of our domestic bards, who had been driven from it, returned after years of wandering to die under the shelter of our walls. The Irish are all more solicitous about dying in peace and a certain kind of dignity, than about all the comforts of life. He was blind, but his memory was faithful to the path that led him home. When he believed himself near the place of destination, he stopt, worn with fatigue and emotion, to rest himself among some ruins, from which he heard the cooing of a dove.

He asked a passenger to whom those ruins had belonged, and was told that those walls were all that remained of a family seat of the O'Morvens, who had been driven from it when dismantled in the civil wars. It was one of our castles, for no part of Ireland was without them then: it was the roof under which he had lived, and under which he had hoped to die. But even this hope had failed him, and he felt his age more helpless, and his blindness darker than when he sat down among the ruins: the ruling passion was strong, even in death. Before he expired on the spot, he poured out his grief to his harp in a strain addressed to the solitary tenant of the ruins—the dove, whose notes the music seems to imitate. The words are beautiful, but I will not be guilty of doing them into English: their intranslatable beauty is like what we are told of the paintings of Herculaneum, which preserve their

rich colours in darkness and concealment, but when exposed to the light and modern eyes, fade and perish."

As he spoke, they reached the island: they landed on the grey, furrowed strand; and following a path broken by fragments of stone, which gleamed in the moonlight, and clusters of weeds and moss, that gave a gay barrenness to the scene which increased its sadness, they entered the ruins of the abbey. The walls still retained the form of the cross. One tall tower stood yet in the centre of the ruins: the interior of the building was a mass of ruins. The light, piercing through windows, as richly wrought by most fantastic foliage as they had once been with the tracery that connected their slender stone arches, shewed confused heaps of crosses, and tombs, and mounds, over which the long grass waved like the bending form of the mourner that had once wandered and wept there. As Connal entered the ruins, he walked with a

less lofty step. Armida, who was gazing on the huge grey walls that looked like a range of unhewn rock, saw the shadow of his tall figure bend as he crossed himself, and murmured a prayer for the souls of his ancestors. Wandesford was silent: he had no soul for these scenes: his common-place of observations was exhausted. Armida repeated the first lines of Volney's well-known address, beginning—" *Je vous salue, ruines solitaires.*" She thought that the application would convince Cornal she was touched by local feeling, but he checked her with that wild energy, that while it offended filled her with admiration.

"The nameless ruins," said he, "which are supposed to commemorate greatness now unknown, and virtues that have no other memorial; ruins amid which fancy sits down at leisure to dream of what its tenants might have been; such may suggest an abstract and indefinite melancholy—a melancholy without passion, and

without remembrance." His voice trembled as he added, " But here is a local genius : a spirit of eloquence and mortality seems to have taken up his residence between the living and the dead, and to interpret to one the language of the other. I feel who lies below : every step I take awakes the memory of him on whose tomb I tread, and every hour seems weary till I lie down with them, and are forgotten."

Armida's heart swelled with passion at this contempt of life, that seemed to imply a contempt of her ; but she called her pride to her, and tried to read by the moonlight an inscription in English on one of the tombs that besought her to " praye for the soule of Connal O'Morven, prince and chief of the isles, whose nobile deeds and acheevements ——" Struck by the coincidence of the name, she could read no more : she turned to view a strong effect of the moonlight as it broke through the great eastern win-

dow, and shone like silver on the tomb below, while all around was black, from the foremost clouds of the storm that hung like a dark roof over the ruins.

“Will you not take up the tale of noble achievements?” said Wandesford, sarcastically, “and tell us what royal dust we are treading on?”

“No, sir,” said Connal, haughtily; “silence is all that dust demands from me: silence suits the memory of those whose lot is ambition without fame: let the last of their race bestow on them all he asks for himself—silence and oblivion: if they were mild and brave, if they were loved by their vassals, and feared by their foes, it has followed them where no herald’s voice can be heard, but on earth they were unknown—they were Irishmen: their courage, their feeling, their deeds of war or of mercy, survive only in the songs of their country—songs melancholy as the Eolian harp, and like it murmuring only to the winds.”

Armida observed that there were perhaps countries, like the stars mentioned by Newton, whose light had not yet reached the world; and when he bowed silently in answer, she still urged him to speak of himself: she asked him whether he often visited that spot.

“Yes,” said Connal, “I visit it often: often when the sight of the castle has awoke the bitter thought of my alienated home and rights, I come here to reconcile myself to what I have lost by the view of what none will contend with me for; and when I think that the proudest of those who hung their shields in that hall, or blew their horns on those grassy hills, are now a clod of the valley, I blush at the struggles of my proud spirit, and look calmly on the only home my fathers have left me: it is dark and cold, but as warm and bright as any the world has to offer one like me.”

Armida hid her silent tears with her veil, and she said to herself:—

“Oh! that he were less above nature, or that I was more so.”

Connal was pointing out to Wandesford the figures carved on the most ancient monuments: Wandesford viewed them with a contempt he delighted to express, and he eagerly compared those rude relics with the splendid monuments of Grecian art at a still earlier period.

“The greatest works of antiquity,” said Connal, sternly, “were the productions of despotism or of superstition. At the time that Rome could boast of a Brutus, the temple of her principal deity was but fourteen feet in length, and without any light but what it received from the door: yet the name of Brutus has survived that of him who built the Pyramids. I had rather be seated in the halls of my fathers, open perhaps to every wind of heaven, with my bards and my warriors around me, than be the supple, silk-clad pensioner of an English minister,

breathing an atmosphere thick and heavy with the curses, and drinking wine, into which their tears have dropt, and turned it to poison."

Wandesford, reverting to the ancients, praised them with enthusiasm, and Armida joined him, for she admired the ancients from taste and habit, and she wished to rouse the proud national Milesian to opposition.

"I allow them," said Connal, "to have been perfect in the art of representing the human form, but they knew little of the human heart: all that brings our mind in contact with the minds of those who lived two thousand years ago; all that makes us feel the electric thrill of humanity together, though at the remotest ends of its cord; all this we seek in vain in the writings of the ancients: their feelings appear to me the manufacture of policy and superstition; their pietas means something

very different from what we call natural affection. Of love they appear to have known nothing, or worse than nothing; friendship and public feeling they certainly had, but as cold and rigid as the marble that recorded it."

"And pray," said Wandesford, "to what do you ascribe the change you imagine to have taken place in the human mind?"

"To that religion," said Connal, "that has given man a new heart."

Wandesford burst into a savage laugh, but this did not deter Connal from vindicating his faith with a power of argument and of eloquence that the infidel shrunk from: he was silent, and Connal added with emotion:—

"I am not advocating the cause with the powers or the views of a theologian: I speak with the feelings of a man, who would struggle sore for that hope which can alone render a life like his supportable,

"I cannot resign for a laugh the only refuge of my soul hereafter, almost its only refuge here."

Armida's proud heart swelled at this preference, even of heaven, and she tried to recall her former powers, and convince him she was as much detached from earth as himself. She was leaning on a tomb-stone, and as the pale light touched her form with visionary beauty, she spoke of the scenery around, and of the feelings it inspired: she spoke of the dead, but her thoughts were on the living.

"On such a night as this," said she, "the dead speak to us in the very silence that sits on their graves; this dim light, these ruins, this stillness utter a voice to us—a voice that has no terror in it: the ghastliness of supernatural feeling is no more; we remember the dead no longer as the inmates of a state which man dare not behold: we remember them as those we have loved on the earth so well; and

their paleness, their coldness, we think of as we would of their faded looks when ill; and even while we lament their insensibility, we believe that they listen to us. It is a night and a hour," said she, her soul touched by Connal's devotion, "to make an infidel adore. I would not resign the glow of religion I feel at such an hour for worlds: such feelings might become habitual to me, had I but a monitor."

As she spoke she turned her eyes away from Connal in proud grief, and fixed them on heaven, as if appealing from his coldness and desertion. That moment, above all others of existence, tried the soul of Connal: all the armies of the earth could not have withheld him from throwing himself at her feet; but the thought of his destiny came on his heart, and he stood silent, motionless, and in agony. Armida, even in that dim light, perceived the conflict, and pursued her triumph.

“Religion with me must be the religion of feeling, the impulses of an hour like this, caught from ‘commercing with the skies,’ the ocean, the moonlight, and the dead, since the living have no feeling.”

Connal struggled to answer her that he might recall himself.

“Oh! your’s is the language of a mind too much at ease. I have known beings whose exhausted strength could not bear them to the doors of their hovels; beings upon whose black and wasted lips if the wind of heaven was to breathe it would destroy them; beings upon whose sightless eyes the sun and moon rose and set in vain: and shall those who cannot gaze on nature be denied the consolations of religion? Religion is for the wounded in spirit, whom the world cannot heal; leave it to them and me.”

Awed, humbled, offended, and enchanted, Armida was silent: there was a mild feeling force in all he said that made her

poetical language sound weak and trivial. Her genius seemed to shrink under the masculine energy, sad and stern, that his character displayed; yet still her pride hated his superiority, and she readily assented to Wandesford's proposal to quit the ruins before the storm approached: just as they put off from the shore, it came on with a violence that rendered their situation in a moment full of danger.

To get back was impossible: the wind blew right from the island: Armida was startled from her mingled thoughts of Connal by the broad blue sheeted lightning streaming in her face: she turned to Connal, and saw him in his dark strength of form and mind rising to meet the danger; she felt raised above it herself. Anxious to make him believe her courage, she spoke of the superior rage and terror of the storms on the continent, which she had often witnessed, and she mentioned one at Rome, where the terrible colours that

streaked the thunder-clouds were reflected on the faces of the spectators, some of which, tinged with green and yellow, and sulphurous red, and distorted by expressions of fear and horror, seemed almost diabolical.

Connal saw their danger : he wrapped his mantle round Armida, and rowed with all his strength. Wandesford was loud in complaints, and curses of his own folly in accompanying them.

“ You should not have let us go,” said he to Connal.

“ Let us now think only of returning,” said Connal, calmly.

The storm now grew terrible : the oars were useless : the wind drove them rapidly towards the shore, but it was a part of it where their boat must be dashed to pieces, even if it could live through the breakers, whose yellow high-wrought foam they could now see distinctly by the flashes of lightning. Their danger was now evident : the heaving of the boat

made it impossible for Armida to sit without support, and the waves, dashing over her every moment, drenched her through the thick mantle Connal had wrapt round her; yet she neither murmured or trembled: she wondered at her own super-human courage, and knew not that the inspiration came from his presence: she felt all her danger, but she felt more strongly the pleasure of clinging to him for preservation; and when by the pale and stormy light she saw the agony of his countenance when he looked at her, and felt his frame convulsed with emotion when a wave reached her, she wished for life. Wandesford vehemently insisted on their getting to shore: Connal in the pauses of the storm explained to him the danger of the direction they were impelled in, and at the same time exerted himself to the utmost to row round a point of rock where a sloping shore made their landing safe.

"Oh! then, for God's sake," cried Wandesford, "exert all your strength: you said your strength was great: strain it to the utmost and save us: you who could pile up the stones in that cave, can't you row to that place you speak of? Damn every infernal inch of it: I wish they were all in the bottom of Hell before ever I ventured near them."

Wandesford was no coward: he had the reputation of a brave man and good officer: he had in fact the courage of thousands—the courage, that, stimulated by witnesses, or by military tumult, could rush on death: the courage of the senses rather than the mind. But this was a new mode of danger and death: he shuddered at the thought of perishing by water, or perishing in cold blood without witnesses, or noise, or pomp, or any thing to reconcile him by pride to the loss of life, and hide the tremblings of his own heart from him: he besought

Connal, with the importunity of a child, to save them. Connal cast a look at Armida, and that impulse seemed to awaken all his powers of mind and body. Exhausted as he was, he again collected the whole strength of his adamantine frame. There was something of supernatural force in his look and motions, as at one moment he raised his dark flashing eyes to heaven with a look between appeal and defiance, and the next bowed himself to his toil, his long hair streaming on the blast, like a signal of distress, and dashed the waves with the arm of a giant. As the moon gleamed through the driving clouds, Armida beheld him exert that dreadful strength which seems the last effort of nature. The muscles of his arms and neck were swelled to the size of cords: his dark hair, that he impatiently shook back, was matted with the thick drops of toil: his teeth fastened in his quivering under-lip, his distended nostrils, his eye-brows drawn to a point,

his short respiration, the convulsed, elastic spring of his motions terrified her, though she knew her life depended upon them; and when the fuller light fell on his face, she saw the dark, sanguine hue with which despair and fatigue overspread it, and his bloodshot and bursting eyes that seemed starting from their sockets.

"Oh! you will kill yourself," she shrieked, wild with pity and terror: "and you cannot save us: let us perish, since we must perish, without this terrible struggle."

"Are you mad?" cried Wandesford, with brutal oaths: "I tell you you are lost if you drop the oar a moment. Row on, row on, or we are lost."

Connal had not remitted his hopeless toil for a moment, but he now bent his breast to it with an agony of strength. For a short-time the elements appeared to have some mercy on them, and during

this interval, his exertions, almost supernatural as they were, seemed to flatter them with safety; but in a moment the gusts came down with doubling fury. Armida clasped her hands and gazed in horror on the waves, that, tossing in a thousand forms, seemed to rush on them like a host of devouring monsters. Connal called to her to cling to him with all her strength: she clung to him: the waves were scattered by the veering blast, and they heard them broken and howling at a distance like beasts of prey: there was a pause: they looked round aghast: the retreating wave advanced again like a sea in storm in itself. Wandesford, shouting with fear, started up and attempted to jump out of the boat. Armida, who had lost all courage, involuntarily stretched out her arms to him, and adjured him to save her, and Connal in vain exclaimed that if he stirred he would upset the boat. Wandesford,

alive only to his own safety, brutally dashed her off, and in the convulsions of his fear upset the boat: they were plunged into the water.

"Then we must perish," cried Armida, faintly laying hold on Connal. He had already folded one arm round her, while with the other he desperately prepared to swim to shore.

"Not thus: oh! it were too blessed for me such a death."

She heard him murmur, but she knew not what he said: terror had deprived her of her senses. For a few moments Connal struggled with the waves with more than the might of man, but in vain: the fury of the waves defied a single arm: the other was wrapt round her: the agony of feeling impaired his strength: he could have saved any one but her,

At that moment Desmond's boat came up; Armida was placed in it, still insensible, but Connal, though he clung to

the side, still refused to enter it, till he had saved Wandesford, who was drifted near them, hanging in delirium on the wreck of the boat that was floating with her keel upwards. Their struggle to reach the shore was short, dreadful, and fortunate: Connal was the last to land. Desmond, grasping his brother's hand, burst into an agony of tears, and hung on him for some moments with a boyish passion, which alarmed while it melted Connal: he only allowed himself to press the hand that had saved him from death, for Armida still lay lifeless in his arms.

A short debate was held, and Desmond intreated Connal to resign his burthen to him, exhausted as he must be with toil and wet.

"I am indeed exhausted," said Connal, "and therefore let me hold this cordial to my heart; so sweet, so rich: oh! leave her in my arms."

Wandesford was committed to the

servants, and Desmond flew to the castle to pacify Lady Montclare. The castle was near, yet Connal often paused with his burthen, though not from weariness. She now respired, and spoke at intervals, but her reason had not yet returned: he gazed on her pale, still corpse-like beauty in passion and despair.

"Once only!" he murmured; "will this be allowed me but once in life—and oh! how sweetly would such a life as mine be exchanged for such another moment."

Her wet hair had fallen back from her cheek: he touched it with his lips: she sighed: his hyacinth breath, warm with life and passion, passing over her cheek was balmy to her returning senses: she seemed to see him in a dream. Her arm that hung on his shoulder now half-extended itself, and sunk again; the soft fingers, with a tremulous motion, touched his neck: he felt every nerve in his body shiver: the

anguish of passion increased with its hopeless fondness: he held her to his breast in sweet and bitter ecstasy; he felt her too precious to be possessed, or to be resigned; he felt that he could clasp her to his heart with desperate love, and then spring with her from the rock he was climbing.

The servants of the castle were now approaching in every direction. He answered them calmly, but he would not resign her to any: he bore her into the hall of the castle, where the family were assembled, who all flew to her with an eagerness that made them forget her deliverer. Connal watched them silently while they applied the usual means for recovery. As she opened her eyes, a smile of joy the most brilliant and exquisite flashed over his face, but he turned abruptly away to where his father, Lady Montclare, and Endymion, were hanging round the idol Desmond with blessings and praises. Connal looked at them for

a moment; he heaved a sigh that no one heard, and proud in silent anguish turned away, and cold and solitary, retired to his cold solitary dwelling without a word.

CHAP. IX.

Then to forsake me for a slave!

PHILLIPS—*Distressed Mother.*

ARMIDA did not quit her room till late the following day, nor did Wandesford; but neither were confined by indisposition. He passed the time in sullen rage and stifled execration: she in a "long, long thought of Connal," in that visionary state, when the mind, worn out by violent emotions, reposes on a beloved image that seems to appear by moonlight, faint, distant, delicious.

She met Wandesford in the evening with perfect calmness, for a mind possessed with real passion sees every other object with indolent complacency.

As the evening advanced she wished to see him again, to see him before the glow of

last night's struggle had departed and left him dark and cold: she wished again to see him as he was last night; his pride, his coldness, his stern and troubled majesty, all swept away and forgotten in the moment when he clasped her in his arms, and struggled for her with the elements, and would have died to save her. She grew restless and absent, and at last, starting up, she proposed to Rosine to walk on the rocks.

"To walk!" repeated Lady Kilcarrick; "why sure you must be mad to think or talk of walking so soon after your adventure, and to the very same spot too: I protest I think there is something quite indelicate in going out so soon."

Lady Montclare, fixing her expressive eyes on her daughter, merely observed that the place might revive sensations too painful and too dangerous.

Armida felt all her mother's meaning, and, turning away with an air of haughty levity, said the terrors of last night were

like the wound in the Grecian fable, that could only be healed by the weapon that inflicted it, and nothing but the sight of those rocks could give her tranquillity again, and she hurried Rosine away.

Wandesford followed them: he had put the most favourable construction on her silence: he imagined that in her own terror she had forgot his; and he believed her acceptance of his addresses too public to admit of her retreating in consequence of an obscure adventure.

Their walk was a silent one: Wandesford was sullen, Rosine thoughtful; and Armida's eyes wandered over the prospect, as if she had not come out to gaze on rocks. Her silence and absence, however, increased every moment, and she was at last turning reluctantly to the castle, when Connal suddenly appeared at the door of a solitary cottage, which was perched like a cottage among the cliffs above.

Armida at his sight started with an

emotion too visible to Wandesford. He looked at her, and his expression for a moment was so direful that Rosine eagerly proposed returning: Armida, with all the pride of her character, refused.

Their meeting was cold and embarrassed: she had expected to see him delighted at her thus coming to seek him, and she found him distant, confused, and absent. His confusion too visibly increased when Wandesford observed that that cottage appeared his favourite haunt.

"I visit it frequently," said Connal, hesitating.

"Some uncommon, some secret attraction appears to reside there."

"The prospect from it is beautiful," said Connal, his colour deepening.

Armida instantly turned her steps towards the cottage. Connal said something dissuasive; but she pressed on without heeding him, and the rest followed.

"I told you," said Wandesford, when

they reached it, "it must be some secret attraction that draws Mr. O'Morven here, for the view is the most barren these barren rocks afford."

Armida did not hear him: she was listening to the mournful accents of a female voice within the cottage. They all heard it, but none of them spoke. The cottage door was open: twice Armida looked in, and twice she proudly drew back; but her passion was now too powerful for her pride. As they descended she looked back, and saw a beautiful girl, who was wringing her hands over an infant that lay in her lap. It was smiling at her, and there was a bitter contrast between the happy inanity of the child and the conscious agony of the mother.

Armida felt her breath suspended: she fixed her eyes on Connal with an expression which, had he known any thing of the language of woman's eyes, would have told him more than language

could tell. His were directed to the unfortunate woman, whom he viewed with such obvious, unmingled compassion, that Armida in a moment felt it was impossible he could thus pity what he loved. She was now turning her beautiful eyes on him with a different expression, when a burst of military music, that startled the echoes of the desert shore, struck on their ears.

Wandesford exclaimed it was the band of his regiment ; and a moment after a party of soldiers, emerging from the rocks, extended their glittering lines along the shore. It was a detachment which had been ordered to quarters on the coast. The troops halted, and the officers advanced to pay their respects to Wandesford.

Proud of the opportunity of displaying the beautiful form beside him as his intended bride, he addressed them with unusual affability, introduced some of them to Armida, and mentioned his resi-

dence at the castle, where, he informed them, Lady Montclare would be happy to welcome the friends of her future son-in-law.

Armida, compelled by this reference to her, and by the officers evidently waiting for her to confirm the invitation, uttered a few polite words; but, few as they were, she hesitated, and wished to recall them when she thought of the sanction they gave to Wandesford's pretensions.

The officers, who had heard of Armida both in Italy and England, and whose curiosity had been still more excited by the report of her marriage, when they at length saw her so beautiful, so lightly attired, wandering along the rocks of a wild shore, almost took it for a fairy vision.

She had uttered but a few words, but those few had conveyed to them all the charms of her voice and splendid address. They whispered their admiration

loudly to each other, and their congratulations still more loudly to Wandesford.

Armida heard them, and heard them with a pleasure she could not resist ; flattery she had so long been accustomed to, that it sounded in her ear almost like native music.

Inspired by pride and love, she now displayed her long forgotten eloquence of language and attitude, pointed out the most striking views to the strangers, and accompanied her remarks with all the undulation of her beautiful form, for which admiration afforded opportunity, till in the mixed murmur of praise and delight she missed the only voice for which she listened—the voice of Connal. She forgot what she was saying ; and the colour of her beautiful face varied with fear and resentment.

Wandesford urged her to proceed ; her pride came to her relief, and she continued to speak with fluency, but without

spirit, and she turned to another subject to recover herself.

A stream of fresh water fell from the rock she was leaning on into a natural basin, at the bottom of which the colours of the plants and shells glowed beautifully through the deep clear water. She could no longer speak with feeling ; but she spoke with art, and she passed from a description of the small shell found on the northern coast of Ireland, which yields so beautiful a purple, to the extraordinary aquatic weed that floats on the surface of the Rhine, whose spiral elasticity of stalk adapts itself with a sensibility like life to the various levels of the water when swollen by rains or other causes, so as always to preserve itself on the surface of the water : but still anxious to interest Connal, she pointed to the weeds that clustered at the bottom of the basin, and said she almost envied the water spirit such a crown.

"You deserve to be crowned with them yourself as the genius of the place," said Wandesford.

"No," said Armida with forced gaiety: "if I were the sovereign of these isles I would bind my brows with nothing but a wreath of those yellow flowers that are waving on the top of that rock, as if they defied all human reach;" and she pointed to a cluster of flowers that were but just visible from the brightness of their colour on the summit of a rock the most high and perilous in their view.

Wandesford laughed at the idea, and said if she was the sovereign of the isles it would be a good punishment for a rebel subject to compel him to bring her a wreath from that spot.

He had hardly spoken, when Connal, springing forward, began to ascend the rock with frightful activity. Shocked and terrified at the consequences of her fantastic pride, Armida now called, she

shrieked to him to forbear. He was already almost out of hearing.

The officers eagerly began inquiring who he was: his silent majesty had awed them while he stood towering among them, and they now revenged themselves by laughing at his desperate folly. But Armida, who felt this wild action speak, who imagined she heard him say—"Would the ephemeral beings you trifle with hazard life at your slightest wish like Connal?" following him with straining eyes from point to point of his terrible progress. Sometimes she saw him alight on a crag that seemed hardly able to bear the weight of a bird: sometimes he sprung upwards by grasping at a tuft of weeds, which, loosening with his touch, fell the moment he released it. At last he reached a ledge of rock, above which the flowers grew in all their beauty, as if smiling at the danger that surrounded them. They were within a few feet of him: he stretched out his

hand, suspending his whole weight on the opposite limb. The loose stones shook under his feet: they could hear them distinctly in the silence below. Intent on his prize, he reached forward, and at that moment the stones on which he stood gave way—he fell. Armida's sight forsook her, till roused by a shout of wonder, she looked upwards involuntarily, and saw him grasp with miraculous dexterity a point of rock but a few feet below that he had fallen from. Every one now called to him to descend, and each pointed out a different way as the safest.

“Call to him,” said Rosine, “oh! call to him to be careful of himself.”

“Do you call to him,” said Armida, gasping, “I have no voice.”

But Connal, the moment he recovered his balance, began the pursuit again; and after hanging for a few moments between life and death, as if by a single hair, seized the flowers, descended, and, bounding like an eagle from the rock, offered them to Armida.

Pride, and reproach, and love, flashed from his eyes, and his bronzed cheek, and bold, romantic figure, burning with toil and emotion, looked like a mountain, on whose dark side the setting sun had flung a rich and umbered light. As he silently gave her the flowers, the haughty, eloquent Armida was mute and abashed: she shrunk from his look; but when she saw him turn away without uttering a word, her fear of his disdain renewed her spirits, and exclaiming that the possession of what was obtained by his danger could give her nothing but pain; but that no one else should boast that danger was incurred for them, she flung the flowers into the sea, and taking Rosine's arm, tried to walk firmly away.

As they returned to the castle, their eyes were caught by something white floating on a rock near them; it was the dress of the young woman they had seen in the cabin: she was sitting on the edge of a rock that projected into the sea: her face was turned toward them, but she did not

appear to see them. One hand clasped her infant to her breast, the other was extended to catch a white cloak that was flying off her shoulder : she caught at it often, but with such a vacant, helpless hand that still it escaped from her. They passed : the woman did not observe them. There was an overwept wildness in her look, and a desolate absence in her whole figure, that seemed to have nothing more to do with mankind.

Armida lingered. Rosine inquired why they did not go home.

"I cannot go home yet," said Armida : "latterly I feel myself oppressed but in the open air : the cold wind that used to chill me, I love it now, and twilight, and these shores !"

"'Tis a great change," said Rosine.

Touched by these few words, Armida moved hastily forwards, till the figure of Cennal, leaning against the opposite angle of the rock, obstructed her way. He bowed, but did not attempt to follow them. Compelled to speak to him as

she passed, Armida said faintly—"Why did you leave us?"

"To escape from the sight of those men," said Connal, impatiently tearing the weeds from the rock, and trampling them under his feet.

Armida looked amazed.

"The soldiers! the soldiers!" he cried with a sternness that frightened her: "can I bear to see those men, to know that they shall live in honour, and die a death better a thousand times than life, while I, the descendant of princes——"

His voice failed, and he hid his face in his mantle for a moment.

"But I wave my birth, my pride, my nation: I speak of myself as a man. My arm is as strong, and my heart as fearless as any of those men, or their leaders: I would plant my foot beside the firmest of them, and when I shrunk, let him call my birth a Milesian fable: yet I must wither on a solitary rock, unknown, unremembered, watching the fall of ruins that once were the seats of my ancestors,

and, whenever I hear the sound of war or fame, almost wishing those ruins would fall on me and crush me."

Fluctuating between pride and passion, subdued by his melancholy, but wounded even to agony by his indifference, Armida, folding her veil around her, attempted to rush away, when the young woman, who had been sitting despairingly on the rock till this moment, with a cry that had the agony of death in it, plunged into the water with her infant in her arms.

Connal heard the plunge: he did not wait to recognize the object, but, tearing off his mantle, threw himself from the rock in a moment.

Rosine, who had presence of mind enough to wish to spare Armida the terror of the sight, endeavoured to interpose between her and the precipice: but Armida, breaking from her, hung over the very extreme point of the rock with a look whose wild passion terrified her. In spite of the remonstrances of Rosine, who thought they must all perish, she

continued to gaze, till she beheld him, after bringing the mother in safety to the shore, again plunge in after the child, who had fallen from her convulsed arms, and at length swim to shore with one hand, while with the other he held the infant above the water.

At this moment some of the officers came up, too late to do any thing but praise the fearless humanity he had evinced.

Wandesford forced himself to join them, whilst he watched the countenance of Armida. She was gazing on Connal, as he wrapped the chilled limbs of the babe in his mantle, and warmed them in his bosom. In the objects he had saved she beheld his mistress and his child; and stunned and tortured by the praises of his courage and feeling she heard on every side, all self-command forsook her; her high spirit failed, and, tottering forwards with an attempt to quit the spot, she fainted in Rosine's arms.

The party immediately gathered

round her. Wandesford silently exulted ; but he had calculated weakly on the hope of Connal shunning her presence, for the moment he saw her faint he rushed to her, and resigning all care of the sufferers he had saved, supported her in his arms.

She recovered. Before she could see him she felt him bending over her : she struggled for breath : passion, which had deprived her of spirits, now renewed them : she repelled him, and leaned on Rosine, gasping.

Connal retired without giving her another look. She redoubled her efforts to speak with ease and vivacity ; but she was now worn out by the struggles of the evening.

At some distance from the castle she was compelled to pause, and beg of Wandesford to get her some water from a cabin they were passing. While she leant on Rosine, unable to support herself, she observed the cabin was the same where she had seen the stranger at the com-

commencement of her walk. She darted in an eager glance: she could distinctly see the woman stretched on a wretched bed, and attended by others, and Connal seated on the ground with the child still in his arms. He did not see her, but she saw him in all his beauty, for he had thrown back his long hair, lest the water that streamed from it should fall on the baby's face, and his open vest shewed the glowing whiteness of his bosom, contrasting the chill and purpled limbs of the little sufferer whom he tried to warm in it. She turned away, and, with an effort nearly equal to that of him who smiles on the rack, walked to the castle without a sigh.

The moment they reached her apartment, Armida threw up the window, gasping for air: it was the same at which she had first seen Connal the night of her arrival: she closed it, and retreated to the farthest extremity of the room. Some tears stood in her eyes, but she repelled them with a convulsive effort, and when

she recovered her voice, signified her wish to be alone.

Rosine had no spirits to join the party below; and not happy enough to retire to her lonely apartment, she lingered almost unconsciously in the gallery till she heard them separating. She retired as Desmond entered his apartment, and she heard the long, deep sigh of Eudymion as he passed his door.

All was still for some hours: at length Rosine was startled from a broken sleep by a noise in her room: she sat up, and withdrawing her curtain, saw Armida standing beside her bed.

"I cannot sleep, Rosine," said she, speaking with many pauses. "A strange thought has visited my mind, and made me restless. Who was that woman we saw to-night?"

Rosine protested her utter ignorance.

"Have you never heard of her before? — never heard that she was ———"

She hesitated, and then added, in a still more earnest though feebler voice,

"Rosine, let me adjure you to learn who that woman was."

Rosine readily promised, for at that moment the thought of Desmond occurred to her, and he had been famous for rural gallantry before he had left Ireland; yet the next moment, blushing at the commission, she inquired what interest Armida could have in the inquiry.

"Nothing:—perhaps my pride, perhaps my curiosity," said Armida, retiring.

She paused; and returning to the bedside, and laying her burning hand on Rosine's, said with solemnity—

"One request more: never mention to human being what you have witnessed this night."

Rosine promised, and, thanking heaven for her want of wealth, beauty, and talent, sunk to sleep.

END OF VOL. I.

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THE MILESIAN.

CHAP. I.

But still I tried each fickle art,
Importunate and vain,
And while his passion touch'd my heart,
I triumph'd in his pain.

GOLDSMITH.

THE next morning she timidly mentioned to Desmond an interesting female she had seen the preceding evening, and requested him to learn from his brother who she was ; but all the little art Rosine was mistress of could not conceal from Desmond that there was another mover, and a deeper interest in the inquiry than she avowed.

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Desmond eagerly set out in pursuit of Connal. He found him stretched on the rock where he first beheld Armida. Desmond threw himself beside him, and when he saw the deep melancholy that shaded his brother's face, he almost reproached himself for the thoughts with which he had sought him. He hesitated, changed his posture, and at length forced himself to say.

"You can enjoy solitude, Connal, it supplies you with so many delicious images."

"Are the images that visit my solitude delicious?" said Connal, raising his eyes to his brother.

"Oh, yes, for solitude is so congenial to the thoughts of love."

"I am glad to see you in such spirits, my dear Desmond," said his brother, while his melancholy smile shewed he was far from partaking them.

"Oh, nothing in the world gives such comfort to a young graceless sinner like

me, as to find out a few comfortable, consoling infirmities in a character that has hitherto hung before you like a very scare-crow of morality; and terrified you out of all imitation, and your senses beside."

"No man has more imperfections," said Connal, mildly; "but from which of them do you draw all this consolation?"

"Oh, my dear Connal," said Desmond, eagerly, "do not attempt to deny it; I know it all; I have been at the cabin, and seen the girl and kissed the baby, the little darling, and felt how delightful it was to be even an uncle to such an angel. No one could see its beautiful black eyes and not know whose they were. I know it all you see: the very girl you used to torment me about two years ago. How little did I guess your motive was to keep her to yourself."

"For Heaven's sake, Desmond, what is the meaning of all this?"

"Why only that you, like a wise Mentor, sent your Telemachus on his travels alone, and kept the Calypso to yourself—you hypocrite!"

"I know to whom you allude," said Connal, his features all glowing with the radiant shame of virtue; "and on surmises so weak, you pronounced your brother a libertine. Desmond, your brother would have defied the whole world in your cause, before he would have believed it of you."

"Facts, facts," cried Desmond, already blushing with conviction: "this is mere declamation."

"Then you shall have facts," answered Connal, and he circumstantially related the story of the unhappy woman to Desmond, whose heart, during the narrative, alternately burned with admiration of his brother, and with abhorrence of a very opposite character.

"I will fly," he exclaimed at the conclusion; "I will fly this moment to the castle and repeat the whole story."

"Never," cried Connal, grasping him with his strong arm; "never: the circumstances I have related never must reach the castle through my means: my only wish is to be forgotten there, or at least not remembered as one who employed the secrets of the family to assassinate its peace."

"By heaven, Connal," cried his impetuous brother, "you are enough to drive one mad, with this obstinate stupidity of honour. Here, when I came express from——"

The very feeling he was reproving checked him now, for he felt the impropriety of thus committing the character of Armida, whose name had not been mentioned to him, and he added more calmly:—

"How can you tell the good fortune that may be the result of this discovery?"

"I know not nor do I care," said Connal, resolutely; "the good fortune

that must be purchased by mental treachery would be more oppressive to me than all the accumulated evils of my lot."

"And what shall I say on my return to the castle?" said Desmond, dejectedly.

"Say nothing of me."

Armida had not quitted her apartment all day, and she passed her time in traversing it with burning cheeks and a rapid step, as if she meant to fly from her own thoughts. In the evening Rosine entered her room, and in a few words told her unsuccessful commission. It was twilight: she could not observe the change in Armida's countenance as she spoke, and after a long interval of silence she again repeated that Desmond had informed her he was well acquainted with the history of the unfortunate female, but was forbid to disclose a particular of it within the walls of the castle. Armida was still silent, and Rosine, believing that it proceeded from in-

difference to what she had said, approached to converse with her usual familiarity, when she was terrified by Armida suddenly starting from the sofa on which she was sitting, and repelling her with a gesture of desperation.

The passions she has been all day struggling with now burst forth.

"Oh, dupe, dupe, that I was," she exclaimed, wildly striking her forehead, "thoughtless, senseless idiot, to be imposed on by his indifference; to believe there was such a monster as a man without passions: I imposed on myself. He never deceived me; his coldness left me no excuse for my infatuation. The talents that have excited admiration in far different circles, the songs that Italian princes have supplicated to hear, were lavished on a savage Irishman, and he scorned them: no wonder—he was revelling in thought with his cottage paramour; immaculate purity! You came, palled and weary with the blandishments of your

favourite; and Armida Fitzalban, with all her talents, had the honour of winding you up to fresh spirits, like a Circassian slave dancing before the mighty master of the seraglio."

All the haughty passions of her soul flashed in her face as she spoke, and the step with which she crossed seemed designed to crush the whole race of O'Morven into dust. Terrified as Rosine was by her passions, she yet rejoiced to find that her pride predominated, for she trembled at the consequences of this ill-omened attachment. But the feelings of Armida soon subsided.

"How often," she exclaimed, "did I think him a being above the temptations of sense, and only alive to the passions. He has no heart—none: oh, could he have had one, and seen so much of mine without compassion? What night was that we were together on the island? Oh! why did he not let me perish on the waters that night? That night I believ-

ed he loved me: yes, when the waves came dashing over us, when I clung to him, not in hope but in despair, the looks he threw on me were dark and bright with grief and love. The lightning that shewed me his looks had no terror; I watched for its flashes to see him; and when twice he snatched me from death, was it but bare humanity?"

Touched by her distress, Rosine faintly suggested that bare humanity might be all that interested him in the fate of the unhappy female.

"But would he not have spoken? would he not have told me all you have said in a single look? A single word would have brought conviction to my heart. He let me depart without a look."

Rosine was silent. Armida felt it in every fibre of her proud heart.

"I am not what I was," said she, "I am not what I was. The first of his sex never drew a sigh from me before;

never made my heart beat with hope or fear. Let him boast of his triumph if he will, over my grave: my heart may be broken, but never can be humbled. Could I seek his love, I were as unworthy of it as the creature that is preferred to me."

Rosine, who trembled more and more as the impassioned character of Armida developed itself, and the evils of this ill-fated attachment rose to her view, strenuously applauded her sentiments, and endeavoured, even by topics drawn from her pride, to support and confirm them.

"Oh! do not insult my despair; do not reason with me," cried Armida, again yielding to the wild vicissitudes of passion.

"You first mentioned his name to me; you first set me on fire with his praises: go to him yourself—learn the truth from him, adjure him to tell you all; but tell him not who is waiting in agony for his confession."

Rosine was silent, but her silence shewed her steady reluctance to undertake this shameful commission. Armida, blinded by passion, still importuned her.

“Will you be bribed?” she exclaimed, tearing off the diamond clasp of her robe, and throwing it at Rosine’s feet; “will you be implored?” she continued, sinking on her knees before her. “Oh! be not so hard; I am not used to tears or to intreaty. A few days ago, and who would have foretold I would kneel to you, and for one who is perhaps as insensible as yourself.”

Rosine was now compelled to an exertion of mind and resolution she had hitherto been scarce conscious of. Shocked as she was at the situation of Armida, and still more at the fatal prospect of her passion, she revolted, with all the strength of her mind and principles from the confession of such a passion from a woman on the point of being united to another. At suffering she

wept, but at the remotest possibility of guilt she shuddered ; and with all the eloquence of virtue she adjured Armida to remember the solemnity of her engagements to Wandesford, the impossibility of a successful attachment to Connal, insulated as he was by every circumstance of nation, birth, and habit ; and though she trembled at the word, she represented the still greater horror and iniquity of her being united to one man and attached to another ; and not even Armida's pride or superior powers deterred her from displaying her consciousness of that attachment with a force that shewed she was better acquainted with the secrets of her heart than its possessor. Armida, though she still remained on her knees, and overwhelmed with tears, seemed touched with this appeal to her honour.

“ I am ready to fulfil my engagements,” she cried, “ I am ready to marry Wandesford ; and then, I swear on my knees, I swear never to think of him more : only

let me hear him vindicated ; let me know him not degraded by a vile passion ; let me think him the being I thought him yesterday : I ask but that thought to live on, and you may grant it," she added still more wildly, " for if I must be the wife of Wandesford, I feel I shall not live too long."

Heart-sick and appalled, Rosine sunk into a chair. " Oh ! Armida," she cried, " I am weary of importunity ; I am terrified by passion ; I will interfere or resist you no more, but I cannot do what you require : I will go no further in this business."

" You will not !" cried Armida, starting from her knees : her long hair fell over her face as she rose, she flung it back, and flashed the full lightnings of her eyes on Rosine : " Then you would not have him justified ; you love him yourself."

" Rosine could have smiled at the suggestion, but the maniac figure before her

was no subject for smiles; and she said with a firmness that commanded the passions and faculties even of Armida, "You have at length found a way to subdue me, Armida; but it is a way neither honourable to your generosity or to my affection." She was quitting the room, when Armida, who appeared at her last words to awake as if from a dream, called to her to stay.

Rosine paused: "Is it possible," she exclaimed, "is it then possible that I have sunk to this; that twice in one shameful day I have supplicated, and supplicated in vain; that I have forgot my birth, my character, my pride for a stranger, a savage stranger? Am I Armida Fitzalban?"

"Rosine," she cried, her native character returning, "let this night be erased for ever from your mind, as I wipe away the traces of these shameful tears, the first and last that passion shall ever wring from me."

As she spoke, with an emotion that made language impossible, she rushed into her boudoir, and Rosine did not attempt to follow her.

During the remainder of the night all was gay in the castle ; and to the officers Lady Montclare appeared a charming woman, and Wandesford the happiest of men. Lady Kilcarrick alone, who still remained at the castle, was silent and anxious. She had profited but little by her observations: the rapid changes of Armida's mind baffled her penetration, and the mysterious and mutual avoidance of Endymion and Desmond, while it excited her curiosity, defied it. Lady Montclare, too, in spite of the external smoothness of her manner, at times betrayed an inquietude that suggested doubts, which were increased by her long private conferences with the monk, and her evident impatience for the union of Armida and Wandesford: at length, finding she could make nothing of them

as they were, she determined to draw the enemy out of their entrenchments, and invited the whole family to an entertainment, which she said she gave in honour of Lady Montclare's arrival in Ireland. Wandesford eagerly accepted it, though he hated Lady Kilcarrick, as it gave him an opportunity of appearing publicly as the intended husband of Armida; and Lady Kilcarrick set off the next day to prepare Lady Gabriella for the important part, and to summon all the country to her fête. Armida at first determined not to go, but she was no longer the mistress of her own actions, and she had no excuse for resisting the importunities of Wandesford: during the interval, she remained in her apartment, into which not even Rosine was invited; nor for a week did she quit the walls, or even approach the casements of the castle that looked to the shore.

But though her pride could command her feelings, it could not her health.

She was consuming with a slow fever of mind and body, and one night that the officers who, now were constantly at the castle, were dining with Wandesford, and Lady Montclare shut up with Morosini, parched and panting for the cold sea-breeze, she threw on her veil and walked on the rocky terrace with Rosine: they had taken several turns in silence, when they observed a figure slowly approaching them; it was almost dark, and till they passed her, they did not discover the woman they had seen in the cottage: she paused as if with a wish to address them, but Armida moved rapidly on, yet the next moment turned and encountered her: the woman now made a visible effort to detain them, though she did not speak, and Armida, after a few quick unequal steps, paused:

“Does he send her here to insult me?” said she in a stifled voice: “this was needless, and he shall know it,” and collecting all her spirits, she turned: “Oh,

lady, will you but listen to me," said the woman sinking to the ground as she approached.

"What would you say?" said Armida, calmly.

Between weakness, fear, and the dignity of Armida's presence, the woman did not hear, but anxious to detain her, she again said tremblingly, "Noble, beautiful lady, will you listen for one moment?"

The wretched Armida leaned on Rosine for support. "Am I noble, am I beautiful," she repeated in agony, "am I distinguished by nature and fortune, and yet I am wretched! I tremble before a creature upon whom perhaps my whole sex looks with contempt."

"If you have any thing to say to Miss Fitzalban," said Rosine, "proceed."

"Will she listen to the speech of such a creature as I am? I would not dare to speak of myself, but for one that is beyond all the world beside." She stopped,

and Armida, over whose mind a vague hope began to dawn, desired her to go on."

"I was not always such a creature as I am now," said the woman, drying her tears: "I was the child of an honest man, whom my wickedness killed: he was a tenant of old O'Morven, at the tower yonder. I used to see him at chapel, but I did not go there to mind my religion, or any thing but Connal O'Morven: Oh! from the first day I saw him coming there with his grandfather leaning on him, and putting him in his place, and never lifting his eyes from the altar while he staid, and bowing to us as he led the old man out, I thought I could die on the spot for a look from him: at first I was so melancholy, I did not think it could be love for him, till one day as I was sitting at the cabin door, he rode past on an unruly horse; and as I looked after him as far as I could see, he dropped his whip: oh, I thought I never would be in

time enough to pick it up for him, and when I did, and gave it to him, he thanked me in such a voice: oh! the sound of it will come to my ears when I am dying. As he rode away, some briar-roses that he had in his breast dropped from it: when he was gone I caught them up, and though their scent was gone, I kept them in my hand, and stood looking after him, though I could not see him, till I could stand no longer. From that minute I gave myself up to a wicked mind: I was a likely girl, and I thought I might please him as well as another. I was always throwing myself in his way, and going to chapel, and keeping near the old tower, and at last when he met me, he would blush, but I never could get look or word from him, for he minded nothing but his grandfather or his brother, to keep him to his book, and from running after the girls.

“ Then, my lady, I grew desperate like, and minded nothing, and my poor

father finding he could get no good of me, sent me to my uncle that was in a very good way at Birr, in the King's County, and I went there ; but I did no good there neither, for though I was a modest girl before, yet thinking so much of one man, made me at last that I could think of nothing else, and I minded nothing but going to the square to look at the officers, for I was determined. Colonel Wandesford was there with his regiment then, and oh ! how can I tell my shameful story to such honourable ladies. When he left it, he took me with him to England : he was very fond of me at first, and he brought me to London among all the fine people ; and I thought with myself I ought to be happy, but I never was. The thought of Connal O'Morven kneeling in the old ruined chapel was the only thing I loved to think of : and I would rather have been sitting on this stone watching for a sight of him, than in all the fine places I was brought to : for though I

was so bad, I was not bad enough for what I was, and the oaths and the wicked things I heard frightened me, though I had brought myself to it. I knew it was wicked to go on as I did, yet I was not good enough to leave off; and though I had no pleasure in the clothes and fine things I had, I thought I would miss them now I was used to them, but I had grown so melancholy, that the colonel began to be tired of me, and when the regiment was going to Italy, he told me yawning one day, he would not take me with him. Oh! then my heart was ready to break: I was all alone in a strange country, and I could not go into the streets, or speak to any body without being known for an Irishwoman, so nobody would like to employ or trust me, and I had lived so long in idleness, that half the work I could do before would kill me now. I begged and prayed him on my knees to take me for a servant, or give me to some one else to keep me out

of want and wickedness, but he only laughed and went out from me. I saw him no more for some days, and in the mean time I found myself in a situation that I was sure he would not quit me, and the next time we met I told him so, and intreated him for his child's sake not to turn its mother into the streets; but he fell into such a passion on hearing of it, that I thought he would murder me. He cursed and swore, and beat me as long as I could stand, and longer, for I only remember falling on the ground and begging him not to kill me, for I was not fit to die; and all that went to my heart was his saying the child was not his own, though he knew it was as well as I, for I never was false in my life but to him. The people of the house came up and took him from me, and I remember no more of that night, nor many a night after: I was not myself. The people thought I was dying, and I wish I had died before I had lived to bring trouble

on Connal O'Morven. It was a great while before I was myself again, and then I remembered every thing in a moment, and asked where the colonel was: they bid me keep myself quiet, and then I knew there was something worse than they would tell me, and they sat watching me all night, and I kept quiet for fear of them, till at last one went away after another, and the only one that staid fell asleep: then I got out of bed as softly as I could, and began to look about the room—I hardly knew it again: all the ornaments and presents the colonel had given me were gone; the people had taken them I suppose for their trouble. On the table there was a letter and a bottle, both directed to me: I did not know what it meant till I read the letter, and then the light left my eyes, and the whole room looked on fire to me: it was from Colonel Wandesford, the man that had ruined me, that left me and his child to famish. He told me that he sent me a

a bottle of laudanum, and the best thing I could do was to drink it and end my cares at once; but if he ever knew me to follow him again, he would shoot me with his own hand: my heart was so forlorn and broken, that I thought I could not do better than take his advice.

"I looked about me; all the house was quiet: the woman that staid to watch me was fast asleep, and I thought before she awoke I would be out of the way of giving more trouble to her or to any one else. The thoughts of my religion came across me once or twice, but when I thought of that, I thought too of the chapel where I had first seen Connal, and since he did not care for me, why should I live.

"I took up the laudanum, and just at that moment the poor baby stirred within me; I felt it for the first time, and from that minute, let me be as wretched as I could, I determined to live.

"I got out of the house unknown to

them, and, weak as I was, I was far enough from London before morning. I need not tell you, my lady, all I had to do to keep life in the child and myself for three years that I wandered about looking for work : every where, because I was an Irish woman, they thought me a rogue, and at last I thought I could not be worse in Ireland ; so I came over, and when I was once in Ireland, I could not bear to be any where but where I was born, and where O'Morven was : I begged and worked my way here at last, about a week ago ; it was night when I came ; every thing seemed changed, yet I remembered every thing well. I did not dare to go near my father's house, and I sat down near this on a stone to think how I had left it an honest girl, and but for my own wicked heart, how I might have been a happy one. I could have sat there for ever and cried my life away, but my poor child began to cry too : it was cold and hungry, and I had nothing

to give it; and though I had no heart to ask for food myself, I thought my father would not see it starve at his door: I got up and crawled towards the cabin; all was dark, I waited for a light or a step for an hour, at last my child cried louder, and I knocked; no one answered. I cannot go on," said the wretched woman, weeping bitterly. "The next day I heard my father was dead—dead for my wickedness and folly; I broke his heart; I killed my father.

"I wandered about some days: I don't know how, nor where I lived, nor where I lay; I wonder I was not killed: I believe the mark of God was on me, and that no one cared to hurt the like of me.

"Of all I knew once no one minded or looked after me; I would have perished but for Connal O'Morven: the very one that I tried to ruin in my folly and wickedness was the one to save me. He kept my child from starving; he

fixed me in a cabin with his nurse, and I came to myself; he got the priest to take my confession, and to give me absolution.

“He would talk to me for hours, and his voice was the first thing that brought me to my senses; when I heard it, the thoughts of my youth came into my heart, and tears fell from me for the first time, and that crying was better to me than food or sleep: when I was able he read to me out of a book, and bid me ‘go and sin no more,’ and I felt as if some angel took away the burning in my head, and the tightness that I felt about my heart.

“I was growing calm, and thinking to do something for myself, when I heard all of a sudden that Colonel Wandesford was come down to the castle to marry you, my lady.” Armida trembled, but she did not speak. “It was like a flash of lightning to me when I heard it; I thought nothing but that he was come to

murder me, for my head grew unsettled again: I ran home to the cabin and locked myself in: they asked what ailed me, but I could not tell, nor knew what was going to happen to me.

“ I dreamed that night Colonel Wandersford came to me all on fire, like the devil from hell, and he thrust the fire into my eyes, and head, and breast, and I got up screeching and ran out; the people in the cabin were fast asleep, and for two days and nights I wandered, still thinking to hide from him, for I was quite beside myself, and that night you saw me on the rock I thought he was running after me, and I threw myself into the sea from him. It was Connal O'Morven that saved my life that night; I wish he had let me die so he saved the child, for then he would never have been brought to trouble for the like of me, for ever since that night he comes to the cabin, but not as he used to do: he never speaks to me,

nor looks at the child, but he sighs as if his heart was full; and once that he was sitting at the door with his hands over his face, I saw by the way he tossed his hair forward when he got up he had been in tears. Oh! my lady, all I ever suffered was nothing to that: my whole generation is not worth one tear of his; and I am sure by the looks he gives me I am some how the cause of it, and I dare not ask him, my heart is so full, and I have such a reverence for him: they are not angry looks, but full of sorrow, and when he smiles through them, sometimes it is like a knife going into my heart, and so I knew, since there was blame and unhappiness some way, it was best for me to tell the whole story, sad and shameful as it was, to your ladyship, for all I wish is that O'Morven was happy, and that I and my child were in the grave."

Again she burst into an agony of tears,

but she might have wept for ever unheard by Armida. Gasping with different emotions, she said, mentally :—

“ Is this innocence, or is it mockery ? Am I the object of derision even to this creature, or may I not become so if I utter another word ? ”

Rosine, astonished and perplexed, applied to her in vain to answer the woman.

“ I dare not speak to her,” said Armida : “ she has seen my heart : a woman cannot avoid the penetration of a woman.”

Rosine thus called upon, said firmly—

“ What reason have you for relating your story to Miss Fitzalban, or imagining she could be interested in any thing relating to O’Morven ? ”

The woman appeared confounded, but in a few minutes she said in a tremulous voice,

“ I will tell you, my lady, I will tell you the whole truth, and what made me

intrude with my shameful story on such a noble lady. I saw O'Morven whenever he came to the cabin, and he had a black rose in his breast, and he would take it out and press it to his lips, and to his bosom, as I would a child, and if I am a living woman, I saw that flower, it is black velvet, in her ladyship's hair not ten days ago; she wore it just on her white forehead: I knew it well, though I saw her but once before that night, and so I thought—I don't know what I thought, but that it was best to tell her ladyship every thing, for if O'Morven is not blamed I don't care if I was thought the vilest wretch on earth, as I am."

Armida now struggled in vain with the feelings that overcame her: she would have assured the woman of her protection, of her pity; but she had no voice; and eagerly throwing her purse at the woman's feet, she turned away.

"He is again the idol of my imagina-

tion," she cried; "his image appears to me once more in its original brightness; I am happy though I never saw him more. It is the character—the hero I love, not the man. ✓

"And was I not worthy," she mused, "to be entrusted with this? How is it that he can thus repel the heart he has subdued."

"Hush, hush," said Rosine; "I see him on the rock below: I have seen him every night since your last meeting: he seems to listen to the sound of the waves, but his eyes are fixed for ever on the windows of your apartment."

"Oh! fly Rosine, fly—pursue that woman, and tell her, as she values my protection, or dreads my resentment, never to mention to Connal that she saw me to-night."

Rosine retired, though reluctantly, and Armida approached to meet Connal.

The light of a pale autumnal moon, struggling through watery vapours, con-

cealed the struggles of pride and passion in her countenance as she advanced, determined to hide the secret of her heart, and force from her proud slave the confession of her power.

He folded his arms, and coldly bowed at her approach. The majestic submission of his figure touched her, and she hastened to speak before her impressions of resentment were effaced, but just in view was the very spot where he had saved her life on the day of arrival at the castle, and she could only observe:—

“How little value you have for the life you preserved.”

“I would sacrifice my own to protract it for one moment,” said Connal, passionately.

“Am I to believe your language or your actions?” said Armida, unconsciously softened. “You have indeed preserved my life, yet you could deliberately devote it to wretchedness.”

Connal started.

"You saw me on the point of union with a monster: you were acquainted with circumstances that would have made me renounce him for ever: you refused to disclose them: you resigned me to him without reluctance: you could have preserved me from worse than death, could and would not."

"I dared not."

"Dared not!" repeated Armida, scornfully. "Do you fear Wandesford?"

"I fear no human being but myself. When I suspect my own heart no temptations can urge me to yield to its dictates, and would not others too have doubted the motives I doubted myself."

In these words Armida felt she was mistress of his fate, and determined to exert her power to the utmost: she demanded if he had disclosed the story of the deserted woman: what motive could the disclosure possibly have been ascribed to, but that of common interest in the fate of a stranger. Connal gazed

wildly on her; his voice was lost; he retreated; he rushed back and sunk at her feet.

“Will you then force it from me; the secret I would have kept on the rack; the last retreat of a proud and agonizing heart; you shall—I adore you: start not back; by heaven you shall not: the death-wound of my pride shall be revenged on your own: the beggared outcast, devoted Connal, dares to love you, he dares to tell you so; even now while your heart swells with pride, while your eyes flash with anger, he invites your scorn, he bids you spurn him that he may fly from you for ever.”

But had he dared to raise his eyes to Armida while he spoke, he would have seen no scorn in her eyes, no banishment in her lips.

Contending with her emotion, she faintly asked:—

“Was it then a proof of passion that he had refused by disclosing the story of

the unfortunate female to save her from an union with Wandesford."

"Yes, a proof of passion the most exquisite: a proof that none but a heart silent and devoted like mine could give. Oh! had I but uttered a word of that story; had I but looked; had I but thought of it; a word, a look would have betrayed the secret I would have died before I had told; but could I have borne to appear to you, to your proud family, an officious slanderer, who, destitute of claims, feeds his mean malice by disturbing their peace."

"Proud and selfish being!" said Armida, mentally; "his own feelings, his proud reserve, his sullen dignity, is all he values:" and she said aloud with haughty irony:—"Is this the softness and submission of a man who loves? You struggle like a lion in toils, and convert your very homage into a reproach."

"Oh! what had I to do with love?" exclaimed Connal, still more wildly;

“what had a thing like me to do, to gaze on you; the wolf that bays the moon has more reason, more hope than I: from the first moment I beheld you I fled your sight; I hid myself among rocks, and you were there; I closed my eyes, and they beheld you still; I wrapped my heart in pride and reserve, and the pressure kept your image closer there. What have I to do with love; far, far away my course must lie, from the fairy isles of beauty and of love, my dark and perilous course. To me life is an ocean in storm; I am embarked in the wreck of a ruined name; I stand on its last fragment, and stand alone: I will sink not without a struggle, but without a murmur; thus hopeless, heartless, fortuneless—cut off from life, almost forgotten by heaven, what have I to do with love?”

Armida's resolution shook with every word he uttered, and she collected its last remains to say in a voice that con-

tradicted her language—of hopeless passion it was fruitless to prolong the pain by complaint.

“Yes,” said Connal, sadly, “we must part; go like the sun to light other worlds, and leave mine in darkness; for the one bright gleam you shed on the existence of a wretch he will bless you for ever; my long night will be without a ray, but not without a dream: on my desolate rock the light of your image will visit me, as the moon does the cell of the maniac, it brings madness with it, but it brings the joy of madness too; it shines on him, and amid chains and straw he laughs at the pride of kings. Go, for what have you to do with one like me; go and shed the influence of your brilliant and lovely mind on the gay, the eminent, and the fortunate. Oh! fortunate they must be who behold it. They will worship you, and you will enjoy their homage: but will they love you like him who on his lone rock will still

see naught but you, who, amid wretchedness and ruin, will think of you alone; will they love like Connal?—oh! never, never!”

Armida now felt she must tear herself away, yet determined that this should not be their final parting. She faintly observed, if they must part, their parting might at least be less abrupt, and naming the night of the fête, told him she would be there.

“But I shall not be there,” said Connal, retreating, and folding himself in his mantle.

Confounded and incensed at this refusal, she demanded if he had not been invited.

“Yes,” answered Connal, gloomily, “I have been insulted with an invitation, but I will not go. The grandfather of that woman was the servant of mine, and grew rich by his spoils. Must I go to see the plunder of my family shining on her walls? I hate those revels. The

very air you breathe is the sighs of her racked and wretched tenantry: the luxurious heat you inhale is purchased by their resting, after a day of toil, on the naked floor of their hovels: the only light of their wintry nights is borrowed from the glare of the torches that conduct you to her feast. I hate those revels. When folly is contrasted with misery, its colour darkens into guilt. The country is bleeding under ignorance, poverty, and superstition, and we cast over its wounds a gay embroidered garment of voluptuousness, beneath which the heavings and shudderings of its agony are but more frightfully visible."

Armida, who expected that the slightest hint of her presence would have made him rush uninvited to meet her, imagined that his refusal arose from not understanding her, and in language that she believed equal to a command, again intimated her expectation that he would meet her there.

"I will not go," said Connal, resuming all his Milesian character. "Once I was there with my grandfather—I was there to see him placed in the lowest seat at her table, amid men whose fathers feasted with his servants: and when their splendid equipages came to convey them home, I had to lead him through a crowd of sneering, pampered ruffians, who grinned to see O'Morven with no other support than the solitary arm of his grandson. With one blow I felled those who were nearest me to the ground, and quitted her walls never to enter them again."

Unused to opposition, Armida lost all self-command at this refusal.

"Heavens!" she exclaimed, "am I the daughter of Lord Montclare; am I her whose look was once equal to a command, whose words were obeyed almost before they were uttered. Oh! why was I insulted with the mockery of superior reverence, when even the com-

pliances the meanest of my sex receive are withheld from me. The first request I ever stooped to make is rejected to my face: the only man I ever deigned to solicit refuses to sacrifice an absurd and savage pride to my intreaty."

"To a Milesian," replied Connal, "the sacrifice of his life is trivial to the sacrifice of his pride."

Armida contended no more, but, retiring, in a broken voice she said:—

"You are right; I should thank you. You dreaded my weakness: you feared that yielding to the softness of the moment I might there have uttered something you would hear with reluctance; that I might have disclosed what our short tumultuous meeting would not permit. You have saved me perhaps from doing what would have made me hate myself. I have now no excuse for not bidding you farewell for ever."

As she spoke she turned away, yet the moonlight that shewed her parting

figure showed too a gleam of passion struggling through the cloud of pride, anger, and shame, that darkened her angel features.

She was retiring, when Connal, on whom a new sun seemed to rise, sprung forward, and with that mixture of awe and boldness which love alone can teach, detained her, while he knelt at her feet.

"Armida," he cried, "you do not hate me."

Armida struggled to release the hand he held.

"Armida, I adore you."

Her struggles insensibly abated.

"Armida, we must never meet again."

He sprung from the ground, and darting from her sight, disappeared in a moment.

Chilled, lost, annihilated, Armida remained on the rocks alone. Was it Connal she heard? Was it Connal who quitted her? Was it the man whose prostrate homage, whose burning confes-

sion but a moment before had almost drawn from her the secret of her heart? Was it he who had voluntarily bid her an eternal farewell! Neither her pride nor love could sustain the shock. Her reason was disturbed, and she continued to repeat the words—‘We never meet again,’ without remembering their meaning. At length the voice of Wandesford, who, much intoxicated, had quitted his party, and had come out in search of her, restored her recollection. Starting with horror at the sound, she flew from him with the swiftness of a bird, and reached her apartment before he could recognise who it was that had escaped him.

He now roamed up and down the passages of the castle, cursing, complaining, and demanding Armida from every servant he saw, till Lady Montclare, finding her efforts to pacify him ineffectual, had recourse to Rosine, to whom even in drunkenness he paid a kind of surly re-

spect, and who at last succeeded in persuading him to retire; but it was so long before she could accomplish this that she did not get to Armida's apartment till some hours after midnight. Armida was reading; the tapers that burned before her shed so little light through the vast and sombrous chamber, that Rosine did not mark her peculiar expression; and in the burning spot that dyed her cheek, her loose hair, and trembling hands, she imagined she saw the confusion and the glow of triumphant love. Agitated with hope and fear, Rosine demanded the result of her conference with Connal. Armida made two or three attempts to speak: at length, with a convulsive effort, she said:—

“We have parted, never to meet more.”

“What can this mean?” exclaimed Rosine in amazement. “Is this parting the result of principle, or of some new discovery?”

"It would be easy for me," said Armida, with an agonizing smile, "to invent a proud tale of his having knelt to me, and of my rejecting him; but sufferings make us sincere. He has rejected me: his own lips pronounced that we must part for ever, and that too when——"

Her voice was choaked, but rising with dignity, she added:—

"Little does he think how I will be revenged."

"Revenged!—on whom?" cried Rosine.

"On myself, on the weakness, the folly of the degraded heart that brought me to this: the woman that has thus sacrificed her pride can make it but one dreadful reparation.—Within a week I shall be wedded to Wandesford and to despair."

Rosine burst into tears.

"Now go, Rosine," said Armida, exhausted; "leave me, I implore you; my

reason I believe has been disturbed already, and if I speak, or think, or listen much longer, even Connal might feel remorse for the misery he had brought on me."

CHAP. II.

I spoke to try thy love, she said :

I'll ne'er wed man but thee :

My grave shall be my bridal bed,

Ere Grame my husband be.

LANCASHIRE TRAGEDY.

BUT two days had now to elapse till the fête was to be given ; and when the night arrived that she was to appear in public as the destined wife of Wandesford all her resolution seemed to fail.

She at first intended to appear with the utmost simplicity of dress, till recollecting that splendid ornaments might withdraw attention from the expression of despair in her countenance, she put on a dress that she had worn at a brilliant Parisian fête, and tried, by the lustre of diamonds, and an unusual quantity of

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rouge, to veil her features from observation. But while adjusting her gorgeous dress, her hands trembled while she thought of the change in her character since she had worn that habit, when, conscious of resistless loveliness and commanding talent, she seemed only to claim and receive homage from every eye and heart; while now, heartless, dispirited, and deserted, she only wished to hide from that admiration which contrasted the neglect of one for whom she would have exchanged all.

Wandesford, insensible alike to her sufferings and her aversion, gratified his pride by the thought of his appearing in the possession of so much beauty and talents.

His vanity might indeed be indulged by the contemplation of her beauty, for never was it more resplendent: formed to dazzle and to shine, her dress was perfectly adapted to the character of her figure, and the fixed expression of her

countenance, though suggesting to a feeling spectator the idea of intense and silent suffering, gave the superficial one an idea of calmness that suffered him at leisure to contemplate features whose perfection any change almost seemed to diminish.

In the mean time crowds arrived from every part of the country. Though Armida had resided some months in Ireland, she had been seen but by few; and the curiosity which her character, her talents, her beauty, and her situation excited, had never till this night obtained a chance of gratification: all came alike prepared to wonder, to admire, to envy, and to discover defects. Of her beauty there was but one opinion—an universal murmur, almost amounting to acclamation, announced the universal sensation. Armida heard it, but no longer with pleasure or pride, and the consciousness of this change in her feelings deepened her melancholy; but when the first gaze

was over, her unchanged features, her motionless attitude wearied the eye, and the youthful and animated beauty of Lady Gabriella, though of a common character, more than divided the admiration of the company.

Lady Kilcarrick, who, to give splendour to her entertainment, was content that even Lady Gabriella should be eclipsed for a time, now advanced to Armida to intreat her to sing, and at the same time the folding doors of the spacious music-room were thrown open, displaying amid a blaze of lights the superb harp and piano, so often sacrificed to Gabriella's neglect: but this, by reminding her of former scenes, only increased her inability; and accustomed to exercise her talents only when inspired by feeling, she retreated with a timidity which was for the first time falsely ascribed to pride; this only increased the importunity that assailed her, loudly mixed with Wandesford's angry expostulations, till feeling

less power to contend than even to comply, she rose and placed herself beside the harp. The attitude she assumed, though unconsciously, formed so perfect a picture, that the circle waited as if for the strains of a muse they imagined they saw. Formerly this admiration would have excited her talents, but since a deeper sentiment had touched her heart, it gave her no sensation but embarrassment or pain. Her hands wandered over the chords. The harp is adapted for airs of expression, but with expression, or any thing connected with emotion, she dreaded to trust herself, and imagining she had still sufficient powers to execute difficulties, she hastily arose and went to the piano. Wandesford placed a bravura song of Catalani's before her, and reluctantly she begun the symphony. Habit supplied the place of talent for a time, and she sung a few bars with her usual excellence, but when she came to the passages of execution, she found her

voice as much impaired as her musical feelings; and the volubility and compass that could once have filled a theatre were totally gone. Amazed and depressed, she stopt, and saw on every side that painful expression with which admiration contends with pity. Wandesford now almost with oaths insisted on her proceeding. Oppressed and intimidated, she vainly declared it was impossible: he persisted, till looking round the circle for compassion, her eye caught that of Desmond, sparkling with something like a tear, and laying her damp and trembling hand on his, she asked if it were possible with such hands to strike a chord.

"Impossible," cried Desmond, and taking the hand she held out to him, he led her away before Wandesford, who, too much incensed to speak, did not follow her.

Lady Kilcarrick seized on this unexpected moment to place Lady Gabri-

ella at the instrument, not without contrasting her forward compliance with the caprice of Italian singers, where she continued for an hour to exercise the patience of her hearers, who in vain wished for the relief of the broken but exquisite notes of Armida.

The dancing now commenced, and Wandesford, striding over to the remote corner where Armida was seated, reminded her of her engagement to dance with him.

"I do not intend to dance," said Armida, starting from a reverie, and hardly recognizing the person who spoke to her.

"What," said Wandesford, with sarcastic rudeness, "has the sea air deprived you of the use of your limbs as well as your voice? You had better, madam, wander less on the rocks. Have you forgot you are engaged to me?"

A spark of its native haughtiness kindled in Armida's heart, as she answered:—

"No, I have not forgot, but you seem

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to forget that you not only anticipate your privileges, but abuse them; they do not extend to insult yet."

He seized her reluctant hand and led her to the seat; and Lady Kilcarrick, who saw her dejected figure, anticipated a new triumph for her darling Gabriella; but here she was mistaken: voice is a local quality, of which the slightest accident may divest the possessor; but while Armida's figure retained life, it was impossible it could lose its celestial grace, and though to herself her movements appeared lifeless and mechanical, they converted the dancers almost into spectators: but Wandesford, who remembered the animation, the vivid and visible language of her action, when he had seen her in Italy, and believing her present languor to be solely the result of caprice or contempt, whispered the most insulting sarcasms to her with every opportunity, and danced with a negligence which filled every one with indig-

nation but Armida: at length, at the close of the set, he awkwardly entangled part of his dress in her's, and detached it again with such rude violence, that her light drapery gave way, and, glad of an opportunity, she hastened from the dance. Lady Gabriella, inwardly delighted at an accident that removed her resistless rival, followed her with a rude laugh, which was scarce concealed by her affected concern at the accident, and her offers to assist in repairing it.

Armida glanced at her dress, which consisting of the slightest gauze over silken drawers, had given way in every direction, and accepted her offer to retire to her dressing-room.

This room, like the rest, had been laid out for company, but was now empty; the lights burnt dimly through the thick foliage with which it was adorned. The coolness, the calmness, and the rich and deeply shaded green of this little apartment, presented a delightful contrast to

the noise and heat of that she had quitted; and with the hope of composing herself rather than her dress, she entreated Lady Gabriella to return to her party.

"I am sorry for your accident," said Gabriella, tripping away, "for as you are so fond of dancing you must be greatly disappointed. I'll send my cousin Rosine to you."

"Do not," said Armida, "she is fond of dancing."

"She! oh, poor creature, it will be quite a charity to prevent her exposing that old frightful blue dress: she has had it these three winters, till the colour is quite dead, and she has raised the ghost of it again to night to frighten us."

Armida mentally thought of the lines--

But oh! what masquers richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms half so light.

WALTER SCOTT.

She was now alone; she sunk on a seat;

a large mirror was opposite to her ; involuntarily her figure was presented to her ; her torn dress, the perfumed and brilliant roses that had adorned it, hanging on the ground ; her hair, which had been so lightly arranged, that the slight motion of her dancing had loosened it, and her rouge, whose unwarying, unimpassioned dye seemed to mock the vicissitudes of feeling that wandered over her mind.

The music, and the sounds of mirth still reached her ear, and she thought, with a kind of melancholy surprise, of the crowds of trivial, uninteresting, unendowed characters, that, without a power of communicating pleasure, could thus busily enjoy it ; while she, for whose approach pleasure seemed to wait as for a signal, alone, neglected, deserted, listened to its sound like an exile to the songs of his native country. The mystery of her fate seemed to oppress her like a spell ;

again her eyes fell on the mirror ; it displayed an image of beauty still perfect, an expression of genius still unimpaired, though clouded and dim : there was no external cause for this desolation of the heart, and she mentally asked whence it proceeded. A voice from within her uttered the name of Connal : it was a tone of reproach. Connal, she repeated again : softer recollections accompanied the sound, and it was a tone of sorrow—alone, unheard, no witness to check the wild and weeping luxury of passion, she sighed forth the name a third time—it was the tone of love. A rustling noise in the foliage started her—she turned : he whose name she had called on (as if by enchantment) stood before her.

Her first impulse was to fly from the apartment, and she only paused to cast a glance on the intruder that was intended to transfix or strike him to the dust ; but that glance shewed him in an attitude

so hopeless, yet so pleasing, that she lingered involuntarily.

"That look bids me begone," said Connal, "and yet I dare to stay. The wretch who is self-condemned listens without terror to his sentence : I have no defence, no plea to offer. The madness of passion urged me last night, when I avowed the secret of my heart—passion to madness again brought me here."

"Have we not parted for ever?" said Armida, repeating his words with melancholy triumph.

"We have, we have," cried Connal, "and therefore I dared to venture here: I had no hope, no wish to meet you: to catch a glimpse of your form, to guess even at its shadow, perhaps to hear the sound of your voice, or even of your name, to mix the sighs of passion and despair with the incense that was breathed around you, even though they could never reach you—this was all I dared to

think of. I wandered round the gardens, till I found this apartment had a communication with them : I gazed on you madly, believing I could retire from the view when I would; but I heard you sigh, and forgot every thing. Oh ! turn not from me, I am humbled below scorn, I am unhappy beyond all fear."

Armida lingered ; he ventured to approach : " And can the brilliant enchantress, amid these bowers of luxury, so suited to the sweet spells she casts on the heart and senses, can she have cause for a sigh ?"

" The sigh was not for myself," said Armida, and she trembled lest she had said too much.

" Oh ! happy is he whose thought is embalmed by your sigh," murmured Connal.

" Then let him be happy in my tears too," said Armida, and they flowed unrestrained.

" Oh ! heaven," he exclaimed, rush-

ing to her feet, "do you weep, can you weep: I thought you all pride and artificial feeling: I thought you a being only formed for homage: one who if the world was prostrate at your feet would not stoop to bid it rise."

"We were then mistaken in our views of each other," said Armida, weeping still. "Oh! yet, yet, let me live on this moment; let me impress it on my heart for ever, that I beheld you weeping, and still you weep. For whom, oh! for whom are those tears?"

"What avails it for whom are my tears or smiles," said Armida, "since your lips have pronounced that we part for ever?"

"Oh! no," said Connal, shuddering, "it was my fate that pronounced it, the mystery of my fortune, the thought that is consuming my youth, and blasting life to my view: in the only moment of joy I ever knew that thought came across me, like a spectre. I started; I uttered a few

words of madness, and fled from you: and even now," he cried distractedly, "even now it visits me—it tells me 'tis madness to look on you, to listen to you, to linger near you."

He retreated from her, and throwing himself on the seat she had quitted, leaned his burning forehead against its edge: part of her drapery still rested on it: she attempted to draw it away, and as he raised his head to release it, he pressed it passionately to his eyes and lips."

Armida felt this was the last moment she dared to stay: "Go then," said she, in a broken voice, "and remember what I would never have told you but in our parting hour: she who weeps in secret never wept for hatred."

She was rushing away, but Connal was already at her feet, speechless, trembling, yet glowing and exalted. Speak, speak again: may I—dare I think—is the fate of the ruined Connal not indifferent?

Speak to save me from running wild with joy."

"Must I speak," said Armida, shedding the softest radiance of her beautiful eyes on him, "must I speak to confirm it."

"Oh! no, no, no," sobbed Connal, prostrating himself almost on the earth, and convulsively hiding his face in her robe, "utter not a word; I hear your silence—it is like the smiling silence of the angel guide of whom the departed spirit inquires his destiny."

There was a solemn, almost a sacred joy in the pause that followed.

"You shall know all," said Connal, slowly raising his head: "you shall know the dreadful secret of my heart to-morrow: my waywardness, my melancholy, my despair; you shall know it all."

In the rapid change of her feelings, Armida scarce heard these ominous words.

The difficulties of fortune she believed her rank and wealth could easily remove, and even Wandesford's claims were forgotten in this triumphant moment. He was still at her feet, when an approaching step startled them; and Lady Gabriella entering, exclaimed, "I thought you were alone, Miss Fitzalban."

Though Armida would have avowed the object of her approbation to an assembled world, she shrunk from this clandestine appearance, and she said faltering, with the necessity of falsehood, "I was here alone—Mr. O'Morven entered by accident: he mistook the way to the ball-room, which I was just going to shew him."

Connal could not utter a falsehood, but bowing to hide his blushes, he said, "I had no intention of intruding on Miss Fitzalban when I approached this apartment."

Lady Gabriella, secretly delighted that the handsome Milesian would grace

her ball; and ignorant that they had ever met before, readily believed them both, and glided away, inviting them to follow her.

“And will you not come?” said Armida, extending her white hand to him.

He must have been more than man who could resist her—her siren tone, her attitude, at once voluptuous and timid, intimating tenderness, and inviting to pleasure; her pride, her beauty, her passion, sparkling round her Calypso figure, and blending the softness of the woman with the splendour of the genii.”

“Yes, I will go with you, enchantress,” exclaimed Connal: “I care not for the event, for what can to-morrow bring that will not be lost in the remembrance of this night.”

He then hurried from the boudoir, and Armida, after adjusting her dress, followed, but she had recollection enough to follow in another direction.

But what a different figure entered the ball-room from that which had quitted it--glowing, brilliant, her features sparkling with the tremulous, with the gem-like lustre of hope and passion; her form almost too bright and light for any element but air to support or to convey; her very vestments seemed to undergo a change like the Cameleon from the air she respired; and her whole figure realized the fable of the statue converted into woman by the charm of love. No longer shrinking into obscurity, she accepted the trembling hand that Connal offered, and when they joined the set, they scarce seemed beings of the same species with those who surrounded them.

When the dance began, all the other performers paused almost involuntarily. Envy was stifled by resistless admiration, and even applause by wonder. The perfection of their figures, the ease, lightness, and enjouement of their movements, the exquisite modulation of their atti-

tudes, that seemed to form a kind of visible music, gave to the spectators the idea of two descended genii mixing in the festivity. The light movements of Connal scarce disturbed a ringlet of the glossy hair that fell on his white neck: and as Armida's nymph-like form glided among the dancers, it appeared like a star sometimes passing through the clouds, sometimes sparkling as it emerged from them: all gazed with delight, but the anxious Rosine (who could as little account for Connal's appearance as for Armida's sudden re-animation) and the disappointed Gabriella.

The pressure of company towards the doors announced the approach of supper, and Connal, ignorant of the modern custom of the young, hurrying down to secure the best accommodations, waited with the reverence of other days, till every female had quitted the apartment. The supper-room was completely filled when he entered, but Lady Gabriella eagerly

displacing those near her, offered him a seat next herself, but Connal slightly bowing, placed himself at the back of Armida's chair, and intoxicated with his situation, forgot alike the luxuries of the feast and the gaze of strangers.

Never had they appeared to each other so resistless: that rose-coloured light which a brilliant entertainment diffuses on every object was more congenial to the voluptuous splendour of Armida's beauty than the gloom of rocks, or the paleness of moonlight: and Armida, who amidst all her passion revolted from the chill and stern character of Connal, his apathy of life, and his contempt of luxury, now amid scenes that renewed her former existence saw him all she wished, and like the sun-flower expanded in his unclouded rays.

Lady Montclare, who had observed the events of the night under her unvarying mask of suavity, at length excited Lady Kilcarrick to remove Connal from Armida,

but at the same time guarded her language so artfully, that it was impossible to urge her as authority, for the Lady Kilcarrick, who knew but one way of doing things, immediately approached Connal, and said plainly: "Mr. O'Morven, your marked attention to Miss Fitzalban is highly offensive to Colonel Wandesford."

Connal started, but soon recovering, said: "Did Colonel Wandesford commission your ladyship to give me this information?"

Wandesford, who was near, relieved Lady Kilcarrick from her perplexity, by demanding did he suppose he would contend with him about Miss Fitzalban: "It is useless for either of us to contend for an object so infinitely superior to us both."

Wandesford rejoined something almost unintelligible that intimated menace: the proud reply that already spoke from the eyes of Connal was prevented by a look from Armida, who had listened with ter-

ror to their conference. He bowed silently, but he retained his station. Wandesford filled bumper after bumper of Champagne till his spleen fermented into something like courage, and he began to pour forth a torrent of abuse against Ireland, her natives, and her national character. The cheeks of Connal and Desmond faithfully reflected the glow of their indignant hearts, and Desmond was bursting into reply, when a glance from his brother calmed and stilled him.

"There is a gentleman," said Wandesford, pointedly addressing Connal, "who would persuade us of the potency of an Irish howl over all the music in the world."

"To one who is insensible of its excellence," said Connal, "it would be in vain for me to impart the feelings which heaven has denied them."

"Aye!" exclaimed Wandesford, with a contemptuous shout, "I suppose your country, like its ancient inhabitants, is

the happiest, freest, and richest in the world."

"Sir," retorted Connal, his eyes flashing with a spirit that awed even Wandesford; "its infirmities, like those of a parent, are sacred to its sons: we cannot prevent their being violated by the eyes of a stranger, but we can defend them from being profaned by their tongues."

Wandesford was silent, and Armida, trembling at the spirit her own enchantments had raised, called on Connal to join her in the air which she had once heard him sing, accompanied by her lyre.

To Connal this public display was hateful, but the spell of Armida's smile was once more exerted, and though he blushed with almost female sensibility at the effort, he complied.

The rich, mingled, solemn stream of sound that rose on the loud, tumultuous gaiety of the revellers, hushed it in a moment into that deep silence that is the most audible language of pleasure. That

deep and heart-thrilling expression which passion gives to the voice seemed to develop new resources in it, even to the singers themselves. Armida, accustomed to the science and modulation of Italian music, exerted all her powers to follow the wild and indefinite cadences of the Irish, and the exertion strongly resembled the influence of her mind on his, pursuing its wanderings, and shedding sweetness and brilliancy on its gloomy and inaccessible wildness. The silence that followed was only broken by Wandesford's whispering to the officers some of the lines of the air :

“ Are the sons of Erin so good and cold,
They cannot be tempted by woman or gold.”

Connal did not hear him ; he appeared indignant at the situation in which he was placed, and no intreaties could prevail on him to sing again, though the intreaties were enforced by Armida's looks : “ How,” he murmured, “ shall I sing the song in a strange land ?”

But though they ceased to sing, those looks, so full of eloquence and passion that they may be called the music of the eyes, with which they viewed each other, alarmed Lady Montclare, who, already apprehensive of the notice which the effeminate beauty of Endymion, and the close attention of Desmond to him excited, rose abruptly to depart. As Armida retired, she asked if her song had caused his sudden dejection:

“The mermaid,” said Connal, “always sings sweetest before a storm.”

She believed these words to allude to the secret he was to disclose at their next meeting; and though she conceived that her wealth and rank would obviate all this dreaded secret could menace, yet these ominous words sank into her heart.

During the journey home, the silence was unbroken by a single word. On her arrival at the castle, Armida flew to her apartment: delighted and disturbed, elated and trembling, she wished to taste

the luxury of passion alone. As she passed through her dressing-room, she caught a glimpse of her beautiful figure, sparkling less brightly with all her jewels than with love, hope, and triumph, and she felt that confidence revive that she never had known since she quitted Italy.

Every object around her appeared tinged with a fairy light: she approached the casement from which she had seen him the first night of her arrival, as if it was the confidant of her feelings, and opened it to inhale the same air she had breathed that night. She remembered she had seen him there, and she thought that her imagination, concentrated as it was, had pictured to her the object with which it was filled. She looked again: a dark figure stood in the shadow of the tower, and a voice, hollow and deep, unlike the voice of passion, pronounced her name.

“Who is there?” said Armida: “who calls on my name?”

“A restless and wandering spirit,”

answered the voice: "Armida, the burthen of my heart can no longer be borne: grant me a last request, and listen to me."

"A last request!" repeated Armida, faintly.

"The rushing of the tide drowns your voice," said Connal: "there is a flight of steps from that tower to the rock: come down, and listen to me."

Armida paused a moment; all was still in the castle, and she descended the steps, and, lightly dressed as she was, stood trembling on the rock beside him. The sad and solemn hour, contrasted with the glow of their late meeting, embellished by luxury and passion, struck her imagination like an omen, and in spite of all the confidence she felt in her own power, she approached anxious and dejected.

"Is this the man," said she, "over whom my smiles and frowns have such power? Is this he who but an hour past called me the arbitress of his fate?"

"No, I am one who can yield no longer to the intoxication of sense or of fancy: a few hours must dissolve the illusion, and precipitate the disclosure that fixes my destiny."

"Why hours?" said Armida, trembling: "oh! tell it now! What is this mystery that I dread without knowing it?"

"Is it a mystery," said Connal, in a broken voice, "that I am ruined? the last of a fallen race, on whose single head the accumulated evils of past ages have fallen, who, stunned by the crash, is looking round, not how to escape, but how to perish with dignity."

Armida, ignorant of life and its difficulties, scarce comprehended him, and she said timidly:

"I have no experience; alas! I know nothing of life but splendour and luxury. Is there no path to distinction for talents and birth like your's?"

"None: I know no art: I have no

profession, no means of subsistence: I am a Milesian, proud of blood, and haughty of heart as any of those whose pride has made me a mendicant, yet I would lay hold on the plough, or the oar: I would toil away my iron frame, my swelling heart, till they became a clod of the valley, could I earn bread by tilling it."

He stopped, but Armida, breathless with emotion, attempted in vain to speak, and he went on with the voice of one who forces himself to confession:

"Why should I hide it—I have tilled the earth for bread. I told my grandfather I was going on a pilgrimage, but I went where I believed my person was unknown to offer myself as a day-labourer. My appearance promised strength, and I was employed to dig the ground that should have been mine: I worked hard." He continued, his breath growing thick: "There was a ruffianly overseer there who oppressed a poor sickly

lad, who worked to maintain an aged parent: always he abused, often he struck this poor wretch. I told him I was willing to undertake his labour and my own: from that moment he persecuted him with more malevolence than ever. Once as he raised his whip at him, I rushed on him, and wrested it from his hand: foaming with rage he caught it up, and aimed a blow at me: yes, I felt his lash curl round my body: the fire of hell boiled in my veins: I seized the reptile, and rushed with him to the brink of a river. Heaven saved me from murder: I could have crushed his life out with my single hand, but the screams and terror of the wretch made me feel him so despicable that my passion was gone in a moment; I threw him from me alive, and quitted the spot and the attempt for ever."

Armida's feelings rising rapidly to a swell of agony, forbade utterance, and he added in a deeper tone, and with many a pause:

"My last, my only resource is to fly to some country where the labour of my hands may procure me bread without insult, and without dependence, where not one single chord of my heart will vibrate to the tone of birth, or hopes, or country more. For this I have been long preparing, for this I am now prepared: in a few days the last of the Milesian race quits the country for ever."

At these tremendous words Armida's resolution forsook her: her pride, her dignity, were all forgot, and wildly exclaiming:

"Must you go then! Take me with you, Connal!" she fell convulsed, but not senseless, into his arms.

He clasped, he almost crushed her to his burning heart.

"Armida! angel! you follow a ruined wretch to distant countries! you bear the change of climate, the hardships of want! you ——"

Still delirious, and believing he was

flying from her that moment, she struggled to hold him with her cold, convulsed hands, wildly repeating :

“ Then you believe all they told you falsely of me : it is not true. My early days were passed in pride and luxury ; I was a vain, proud girl, but I am no longer so : it was all false and affected, I can endure difficulty and want : I will be your faithful, humble mate,” she cried, with increasing agony.

Wild as herself, Connal knelt beside her on the cold ground, now strewn with her sparkling ornaments : her head rested on his bursting heart ; his tears dropped fast on her cold cheek. Never in the pride of beauty was she so lovely, never in the intoxicating moment of splendour was she so dear : she lay on his bosom pale as a dying rose, whom no dews can revive.

“ Armida, my glorious flower ! that came from the south, burning with beauty, the child of the sun ! and must you

wither in the cold bosom of one who cannot love?"

"Is this the hope with which we parted? Is this the light that shed rapture on our last brilliant hour?" cried Armida. "Oh, why," she exclaimed, tearing off her ornaments in despair, "why do I wear this splendour, like a victim, attired for sacrifice? Alas! does it become a wretch who supplicates for life?"

Her hair dishevelled, her gaudy dress soiled and torn by the rock she knelt on, she stretched out her arms to him:

"Connal! Connal! by these tears, by this despair—alas! I have nothing else to plead with: I have no brilliancy, no talents, no charms now. These fragments are the emblem of my situation: you have torn away the flowers from life, and crushed them in the dust like these."

Gasping and speechless, Connal gazed on her.

"This sight makes me a monster," he murmured. "Armida, spurn me, hate me, bid me begone: where is your pride, Armida?"

"Alas! when I have sacrificed all the dignity of my character and sex, why should I spare my pride, why should I spare a few fruitless words? On my knees I have implored you: the proud Armida, whose heart no human power has ever touched before, has knelt to you. What can I do more?"

"Then I will stay," said Connal, with dreadful resolution: "I will stay and perish before your eyes."

"But I have wealth enough," said Armida.

"I am bound to brave and faithful men: I will desert them: I will stay, and be a villain."

"I have wealth enough for all," again repeated Armida.

"Oh, God!" exclaimed Connal, in the proud torture of his heart, "I must

feed on the spoil of the first of human hearts: I would sooner," he cried, stamping with fury, "I would sooner, like wretches in a wreck, gnaw the flesh off these strong arms than suffer them to fall idly by my side, while a woman fed the descendant of Irish kings."

"Go then," said Armida: "I am unable to contend: my knees are weary, my struggles are over. Go, burdened with my death, but never, never with my reproaches!"

A noise, like that of an opening casement, reached their ears at this moment. Armida started, for she saw it was in Wandesford's apartment, and she adjured Connal to quit her instantly.

"And leave you exposed to his insult," said Connal, indignantly.

"Oh, no, no; begone: it is your presence can expose me to insult. I can reach my apartment in a moment.

Begone, if you value my peace or fame."

Connal disappeared in a moment, and Armida returned to her apartment with all the speed terror allowed her, and extinguishing the lights, she stood watching at the casement.

In a few moments Wandesford, who had been obliged to find his way through the passages of the castle, appeared below her window. He looked round intently, and then appearing to catch some distant object, pursued it eagerly, and was out of sight in a few minutes.

Armida, trembling for the fate of her lover, could support the terror of solitude no longer: she hurried into Rosine's apartment, and, waking her, briefly told the events of the night, and her present terror.

Rosine, throwing on her morning dress, followed her, and they remained

watching at the casement till the setting moon deprived them of light. No object had appeared, no sound was heard : all was stillness, solitude, and fear.

CHAP. III.

The harp that once through Tara's halls
The soul of music shed,
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls
As if that soul were dead.

MOORE.

ARMIDA, starting from her late and feverish slumber the next day, saw Rosine standing at her bed-side. She had at first determined not to appear that day ; but yielding to Rosine's remonstrances, she rose, and descended to the apartment where the family usually assembled.

Her mother, who was there alone, addressed her with her usual suavity, and seemed quite unconscious of the events of the preceding night, and of her having exposed her partiality for Connal to a crowded assembly : but to Armida this silence was more oppressive than reproach.

or menace, and though she tried to imitate her mother's self-command, she shook at every sound, and listened every moment in the hope of hearing Wandesford's name mentioned. At length, to conceal her fluctuating complexion, she took up a book; but she had hardly done so when Wandesford entered the room, his dishevelled appearance proclaiming that he had not past the night at home.

He did not notice Armida; spoke slightly to Rosine; but addressing Lady Montclare with unusual solemnity, desired a few moments private audience with her.

Lady Montclare, trembling, but externally calm, rose to grant it, and Armida and Rosine were left alone aghast.

Their suspense did not last long, for Wandesford, returning in a few moments, and solemnly approaching Armida, said—

“Miss Fitzalban, will you honour me with your attention for a few moments?”

Rosine was now quitting the room, when he called aloud—"Miss St. Austin, let me request you to stay, and be a witness of my conference with your friend.

"Miss Fitzalban, I demand whether my addresses to you were not sanctioned by the approbation of your late father?"

Armida, who had laid aside her book, but had not ventured to raise her eyes from the ground, bowed assentingly.

"Were they not also honoured with your own?"

With some hesitation she bowed again.

"May I demand then, (as I am justified by your extraordinary conduct last night,) may I demand on what pretence is that approbation now withdrawn?"

"On no pretence, sir," said Armida, now darting the full fire of her eyes on him: "on the ground of facts, which it

would be alike injurious to your honour and to my feelings to allude to."

"I understand you," said Wandesford, his expression darkening with rage and shame: "but I have no time to waste on the despicable subject you hint at: I demand are you ready to abide by the engagement you entered into on quitting England?"

"Your own conscience, sir, may spare the question, or may answer it for me."

"I demand your answer," said Wandesford. "Are you ready to abide by your engagement, and unite yourself to me?"

"Never! never! Neither force, or art, or importunity, shall compel me to fulfil an engagement from which your own depravity has fully absolved me."

"This is your resolution?" said Wandesford, speaking calmly, but trembling with stifled fury.

"It is," answered Armida, attempting to quit the room, "and I call heaven to witness it."

"Then I call heaven and hell to witness mine," said Wandesford, in a voice of thunder. "Proud woman," he continued, fiercely grasping her arm, "within twelve hours you shall bewail it in tears and in blood." He rushed from the room.

Armida sat still in despair; and even Rosine, terrified by these incessant scenes of passion, lost all her resolution, and expressed her fears for Connal's safety.

"And do you think," said Armida, animated by the spirit of her lover, "do you think Connal dreads the anger of living man?"

"Why are you then terrified?" said Rosine.

"Oh! I cannot bear that any one should tremble for him but myself."

A short and fearful consultation was then held, and they determined to send

Desmond to warn Connal of his danger, for Armida too well knew his sanguinary and vindictive heart to doubt of his employing the darkest means he dared. But Desmond was not to be found in the castle, and Mr. O'Morven or the priest she dared not trust, for both appeared devoted to her mother.

The day was passed therefore in an agony of suspense, which the silence of Lady Montclare rendered insupportable.

At dinner-time she slightly observed that Wandesford would not return to the castle for some days, and Armida, who listened as a criminal would to a respite, determined herself to go in quest of Connal in the evening, as her mother never assumed the least authority, or even hazarded an inquiry after her movements.

The evening was dark and gloomy; the autumn was far advanced, and the shore, the rocks, and the heathy hills, wrapped

in mist, resembled the ocean in their unvarying expanse and their tints of shadeless grey.

Armida, accompanied by Rosine, traversed the shore where they had so often met. He was not there. She approached the cavern; but the waves dashing against it prevented her entrance; and at length, more terrified by his absence than by the gloom and rudeness of the scene, she entered on the bare heath that divided Connal's ruinous mansion from the castle.

At the extremity of it she saw him approaching, and all her fears were forgot in the contemplation of his figure as he towered along like one of the heroes of his native bards, around him heath and rock, above him mist and storm; and her passion exalted by her imagination, she felt that to such a being she dared not mention that she trembled for his safety a moment before.

He did not observe the emotion she betrayed; but his face, suffused with a

glow that made the scene like summer to Armida, he whispered,

“ Love has made me superstitious. A thought wilder than a dream crossed my mind this evening.”

Armida listened with pleasure to the confession of weakness, for she wished for an excuse for her own.

“ The old harper,” said Connal, “ who still follows our ruined fortunes, has touched my imagination deeply. Amid the night of age, and want, and blindness, a spark of poetic fire burns in his soul. Ill-fated man ! he touches his harp in empty halls, and wastes on the ear of age sounds that might have roused heroes to battle.

He played for me this evening ; but the martial airs I loved to hear wearied me, and I asked him for airs of passion, which his memory, long a stranger to youth and love, had lost.

“ O’Morven,” said the old man, dropping his harp, and stretching his ancient

hand towards me, 'you love! I need no eyes to see it. Your heart is no longer set on tales of woe or war: it is filled with woman's love.'

"He needed no eyes to understand the burning sigh that answered him: and he implored with such vivid and prophetic energy to hear her voice, that I yielded to his wild request, and even came out to seek you.

"Often," he continued, leading her onward, "when sitting on the grey stone, or by the mossy tree, the only memorials of the heroes of our house, he believes himself inspired, and imagines that the spirits of other days prompt the involuntary burst of song, in which he announces the fate of those who visit him.—He is waiting near us: come, and let us hear if his harp has one chord that vibrates hope or joy for us."

Armida silently placed her slender arm on his. There was something in this oracle of song that touched her imagina-

tion, for when labouring under the uncertainty of fate, the strongest mind will descend to the humblest resources.

He wrapped his mantle round Armida to shelter her from the damp, and as they moved slowly along the misty heath, Rosine thought she had never beheld forms so fair, so towering, so unearthly: their majestic motion, their paleness, their burning eyes that alone conversed, and the dim and shadowy air that fell on them, recalled to her fancy the tale of the Persian princes emerging from the palace of death to begin their flight to Paradise.

The scenery around had that pale and misty look that fancy too might believe the colour of that intermediate region where the bounds of the invisible world are mingled with those of life.

The old harper, seated on a grassy cavin beneath a tree, was waiting for them. His harp was beside him, and the rush of the wind through the leafless

branches above seemed like a prelude to its mournful and neglected tones.

Their steps gave no sound; but he turned his ear towards them with a quickness that proved his hearing compensated for the loss of sight.

Armida uttered an exclamation when she saw him, for his flowing dress, his long, white beard, his large, blue, sightless eyes, and his thin hair waving, like snow drifted by a wintry wind, presented to her sight a being she thought almost imaginary.

The old man's figure seemed illuminated by emotion at the sound of her voice, for he believed that he knew the figure, and even the character of the speaker from its tones.

He spoke eagerly to Connal in Irish, who as eagerly interpreted his words.

“ Daughter of beauty !” he exclaimed in the impassioned language of his country, “ the sound of your voice makes me bewail the loss of my sight again. Oh !

if my harp had but one string left, that one string should be alive with your praise."

He caught up his harp as he spoke; but, long accustomed to sounds of sorrow, he faltered in the attempt to revive those bright and delicate tones that the presence of youth and beauty suggested.

"Fair lady," said he timidly, "let me feel your soft hand: its touch will remind me of the time when my harp could reach the heart, and the fair maids loved its sound well: but none so fair came to listen when I could sing what was pleasant to the ears of lovers."

Armida placed her white fingers in his withered hand, and they looked like snow-drops springing from the brown soil of winter.

He again touched his harp, and Connal said with animated fondness,

"Give us Cormac, the sweetest song that ever was inspired by love and beauty."

At the moment the old man bent over his harp in a trance of feeling; a loud blast of wind swept across the strings, and the sound, deep and mournful, resembled a human groan as it passed along the heath.

The old man shuddered: he dropped the harp, and his sightless eyes rolled in their sockets with a force that seemed stronger than actual sight.

"The hand of the dead is on my harp!" he exclaimed: "there is a spirit in the air—the voices of other days strike my ear—there is a spirit in the air! I feel his touch on my heart! I see him though I am blind! O'Morven, he whispers, 'No song of youth or love!' O'Morven, he bids me sing of woe and death!"

Armida, trembling, grasped for support the arm on which she leaned.

"Heed him not," said Connal; "it is the wind that sweeps the strings of his harp."

"It is not the wind," said the old man; "it is not the wind that bids me utter these sounds."

And with the inspiration, the solemn fury of a prophet, he struck the chords that for centuries past had summoned the funeral procession to the grave of an O'Morven, and echoed the dreadful cry that was raised over the corse.

Connal, with all his firmness, tremblingly alive to national superstition, shuddered too. He led Armida away, and they crossed the heath in silence.

It was now dark, and Armida, whose mind, tinged by destiny and love, was assuming the gloomy colour of Connal's, felt herself unable to resist the oppression of this dreadful augury, and chilled and trembling, her frame weakened by her mind, she hardly suppressed the tears she did not dare to let him see.

As they approached the castle, starting from his trance, Connal implored her in subdued tones to meet him the following evening on the same spot.

"On the same spot!" repeated Armida, shrinking: "ah! do you forget

that spot has menaced us with woe and death !”

“ The heart is above all omens,” said Connal, passionately ; “ love is stronger than death.”

As he flew along the heath to his lonely tower, he heard the sound of rapid steps pursuing him. He turned, and found himself clasped in the arms of some one who fell breathless on his neck.

“ Is it you, Desmond ?” he cried.

“ No, no,” answered a struggling voice : “ I am all air, fire !—I am inspired ! I am mad !—Stay, Connal, you shall not stir from this spot till I have told all, or I shall run wild with rapture.”

Connal paused, and the rising moon revealed his dark and agitated features.

Desmond gazed on him for a moment.

“ I will not speak,” he cried, “ I will not utter a word : you are not happy,

Connal, and I cannot bear to insult you with my joy."

Connal turned his full, dark eyes on him with an expression that at once thanked and repressed his vivid sensibility.

"I am not happy, my Desmond; but while you are so, I cannot be very wretched: but what is this itnelligence that has elated you?"

"What!—I cannot tell: I can hardly think.—Love, youth, beauty, woman! Connal."

"Woman!—What woman?"

"Why, Endymion: Endymion is a woman!" cried Desmond, delirious with joy. "I knew it; I never could be deceived: I knew it from the first I could not be the victim of an impossible passion."

but he was!

"The old harper, Cormac—ten thousand blessings on the dear old dotard! I could kiss every hair in his white beard with more devotion than he kisses the re-

lies in the chapel. This morning he wandered to the castle, and got into the chapel, imagining there was service there, and wishing to hear its sounds once more within those walls. Lady Montclare and Morosini are in the habit of passing hours there, and as they are supposed to be employed in devotion, no one intrudes. They believed themselves alone, for the old man was kneeling in silent prayer in an obscure corner, and in their conference every thing transpired.

“ Endymion is a female : Lady Montclare, banished from her husband because she brought him no son, determined to impose her on him for one : the priest was her agent, and by his artifices Lady Montclare delayed to introduce her to her father till on his death-bed, when he no longer discriminated her female figure. They spoke of the difficulty of carrying on the deception, and of their apprehension that Wandesford or my father might suspect her sex, unless the former was

conciliated by an union with Armida, and the latter by some expedient he could not distinguish. After remaining two hours discussing their plans, the execution of which had almost driven me mad, they went away without discovering him. It is all true, all certain," he continued, anxiously observing Connal's silence. "But on my knees I adjure you," and he knelt to his brother, "never, never to disclose it. Oh! think of Endymion." Connal was silent. "We are the rightful heirs," said Desmond; "but Wandesford, that hateful Wandesford; he has wealth and power: he would dispute our claims, and our lives might be exhausted before his opposition." Connal was silent still. "And Armida too," continued Desmond: "her proud heart would sink with the shame of her father and her family."

Connal with sudden emotion raised his brother, and vowed he would perish before he disclosed the secret.

“ And look here, Connal, look at this delicious paper ; but recently it was put into my hand : it is from her : how delightful it is to say *her* : she invites me, invites me to meet her this night : no, I will not read it ; it contains words sacred to my eyes, to my heart : there is no name, but I have thought of a name for her already, the sweetest, the softest ever borne by her sex ; yet still I love the name of Endymion : I shall love it for ever.”

Connal, his cheek crimsoned with resentment and shame, emphatically pronounced the name of Desmond.

“ Oh ! I know all you ought to say ; I see even in the dark, the frightful face of virtue you have put on : but I am no demi-god ; I leave heroism to you : imagine my situation—imagine yourself eighteen, in love, and me——”

“ It is a subject I must not trust imagination with, nor must you : Desmond, this is not a time for trifling,

the deluded writer of those lines that have intoxicated you is unconscious of her sex."

"But she will not long be so," interrupted Desmond.

"Libertine!" exclaimed Connal.

"Ah! Connal, have you no mercy; does nature and passion plead to you in vain? Is this the heart of a brother? For months past I have never closed my burning eyes: my nights were without sleep, and my days passed in a dream of fever. I am worn to a shadow: I am dying of passion. Connal, have you no mercy: would you dash the drop of water from the lip of a feverish wretch who must drink or die?"

"Yes, if it poisoned him, and his recovered life would bless me for it."

"And would you reject it, if Armida's hand held out the drop of refreshment to you?"

"Oh! mention not her sacred name," cried Connal, with proud indignation,

"with lips polluted by a guilty passion."

"Guilty!" repeated Desmond.

"Yes, guilty: what is the object; what is the hope with which you seek her? Ah! Desmond, that guilt that hides itself even from imagination is the first that presents itself to opportunity."

"My heart is at this moment as pure as your own," cried Desmond, proudly; "I will but clasp her to it; I will but tell her it beats for her."

"You will press her to that heart?" said Connal, placing his hand to his brother's bosom, whose audible pulsation had struck him in every pause of speech. "Then you are undone, and she will be undone; she whom you love. Desmond, I would rather see you lie on this cold heath all night beside me, than let you go to this guilty meeting."

"Connal, you grow too hot; you tyrannize over me: you are too much

the elder brother : you are but five years older than me, and yet you imagine me a boy : by what force do you pretend to detain me ?”

“ By this,” said Connal, and he bent his proud knee to his brother, and attempted to seize his hand.

“ Begone !” said Desmond, who felt it necessary to force himself to passion. “ I despise the humility that only masks an usurped power.”

“ Despise me if you will, to-morrow you will thank me.”

“ Never : my whole life and happiness have been sacrificed to your influence : I have worshipped you like a deity, and you have ruled me like one ; but the reign of your violence was short : it ends to-night.”

“ If to save you from vice and passion was a crime, I am ready to bear your reproaches.”

“ I have no time to waste on you. I

fly to happiness: I leave you to gloom, and solitude, and virtue."

"Oh, Desmond!" said Connal, his eyes fast filling with tears at this unnatural reproach. He choaked the struggling emotion, and grasping his brother's hands, said firmly:—

"You shall not go."

"Shall not!" said Desmond, fiercely struggling with him. In the contention, Connal, who could not hurt him, released his arm suddenly, and the recoil struck him on the lips with such force, that they were instantly bathed in blood.

"Desmond, thus bleeding from your hand, thus more than lacerated by your words, you are still my brother; still the boy whom I love so well. Oh! let not this night say how vainly—I will not be provoked, but I will not be resisted."

"You will not be provoked!" said Desmond, madly: "then take that."

And he struck him.

“Desmond,” said his brother, starting from him, to shun the temptation that trembled in every nerve, “at this moment a single blow of this hand could dash your baby-frame in splinters. Go in safety; but go not to shame and danger: to-morrow you will weep on my neck.”

“Never: I renounce all connexion, all intercourse with you. I abjure you; I abhor you: tyrant and no brother.”

And he flew with the speed of lightning from the heath, for he dared not trust himself with another tone of Connal's voice.

“Cruel boy; return, return—even to-morrow; return no longer innocent, but even repentant, and my arms shall be open to you again: reject my advice, spurn my intreaties; but if you renounce my affection you are lost.”

Desmond was gone: he took refuge in flight from the reproaches of his heart,

and redoubled his speed to escape the tones that recalled them so loudly and bitterly.

Disastrous love, violated friendship, and hopeless fortune, rushing together on the mind of Connal, for a moment overbore its firmness. He threw himself on the heath, and hiding his face in his mantle, wept. The night grew stormy: the wind scattered his dark locks: the rain beat on his bare breast: better accustomed to the elements than to man or woman, he felt their rough greeting like that of a friend, and refreshed and strengthened by what would have sent half of his sex shrinking to shelter, he spread his arms to catch the blast that cooled his burning breast and throbbing head. It was already past midnight, when the sound of horsemen galloping over the heath struck his ear: he turned: the party passed him, and in a few moments the castle gates were thrown open, and by the light of the torch which

the porter bore he saw Wandesford and his servants alight and enter. The gate remained open, and soon another figure rushed out. Connal saw its distracted movements: it approached: the moon fell strongly on it. Connal's heart beat strongly: it was Desmond: he threw himself on the ground, and his deep groans struck on the heart of Connal.

A spark of passion burned there for a moment: in a moment it was extinguished, and he rushed to his brother.

"Desmond, you are unhappy, and you are no longer guilty in my eyes."

The wretched boy clung to the cold ground: he heard his brother, but he dared not meet his injured eye: he shrunk from his upbraiding touch.

"Desmond, Desmond, dearer to my heart than ever; if unfortunate, even if guilty, still too dear: speak to me; rise from the earth; rise and tell me is that unhappy girl still innocent."

"More innocent than I dare utter."

Sobbing with emotion, burning with gratitude, Connal snatched his brother from the earth, and held him to his heart.

“Am I clasped in these arms again,” cried Desmond, agonized with contrition, “the arms I flew from; the heart I trampled on?”

“It was a moment of madness, Desmond; perhaps I did not deal mildly with you: we will both forget it: at this moment I forget every thing but that you are innocent.”

“Oh! no, no—I was as guilty as I could be: that letter was not from her, it was from——”

“From whom?” cried Connal.

“Ask me not to disclose her name,” said Desmond, while the moonlight, pale as it was, shewed his young cheek dyed in crimson. “I will never utter it; I will never encounter her sight; never sleep under her roof again. Connal, can you shelter me for one night: I will

never enter those guilty walls more. There sleeps the innocent object of my love," he continued with a burst of anguish, "sleeps without a thought of the wretch whose heart is breaking for having even in imagination doubted her purity: yet, oh! yet, that she knew the consolation that I feel in the thought that she is so pure."

He dried his hot tears, and convulsively tore himself from the view of the castle.

"Connal, can you shelter me for one night; had they not turned me out, I would never have entered the den of that sorceress more: but now I have no home but this heath—no shelter but these rocks; let me rest my burning head anywhere this night, and I will quit this place to-morrow for ever."

Connal seemed to pause at this request, but recollecting himself, he bid his brother follow him, and led the way towards the cavern. Desmond, exhaust-

ed by emotion, and unable to contend with the storm that raged on the bleak shore, threw his arm over Connal's shoulder as they walked.

"Is this," said he, shrinking, "the support I am worthy of; is this the posture I should assume: oh! no--on my knees I should have supplicated before I dared even to approach you."

"For shame, for shame, Desmond, are we not brothers?"

"Yet you knelt to me," said Desmond, tortured by his very penitence.

"I knelt to heaven when you were gone, and my prayers were heard; you were preserved from guilt."

They reached the cavern: the tide was out; and darkness and silence formed an awful contrast to the agitated passions of the intruders.

"Here you will be safe," said Connal, in a voice of such chilling solemnity as seemed inspired by the genius of the place: "but I must leave you for a few

moments to discover how long you may remain here."

Desmond listened to the sound of his receding steps, till fancy was wearied in following their track, and he wished even for their echo to relieve the intolerable loneliness of the place.

An hour elapsed before he returned, and silently led his brother to a recess where some art seemed to have been employed to form a resemblance to a domestic apartment. The roughness of the rocky walls had been removed: a turf fire burned in a niche: there were books and lights on a rustic table. Desmond gazed around him, and Connal, as if to anticipate inquiry, demanded the events of the evening.

"The moment I discovered my danger," said Desmond, blushing, "I flew from the spot; she called, she tried to detain me. Oh! Connal, I cannot dwell upon that guilty, that horrible moment.

"Though the object was revolting to

me, yet so inflamed were my passions, so subverted my reason and principles, that I felt had Endymion been there—Oh! Connal, you were revenged that moment: I knelt on the ground, and uttered a solemn vow never more to endanger Endymion's peace by my presence.

“I have little merit for this resolution. It is impossible after the discovery of this night that I should ever again appear at the castle; but as if every demon of hell had conspired to drive me mad to-night, as I was rushing out my father met me, and—oh! Connal, how shall I utter it—commanded me never to see you more.”

“My father!” repeated Connal, in amazement.

“Yes, I was too distracted to attend to what he said, but he talked of some offence you had given to his friend Colonel Wandesford.”

“His friend! a man that has treated him before my face with an insolence that made the blood boil in my veins.

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed Connal, traversing the cave with rapid steps, and seeming to commune with some phantom in his mind: "can it then be possible; can Wandesford be such a monster: Wandesford, whose life last night lay at my mercy, and whose life I saved."

Again he importuned Desmond to repeat the subject of his conference with his father, and Desmond, shrinking again, repeated his unnatural injunctions.

Connal silently continued to walk up and down the cave.

"My dear Desmond," said he, at length, "I am not able to speak to you to-night. There is your bed of moss: it is all I have to offer you. Sleep there, my Desmond, and may no thoughts visit your dreams like those which take away rest from me."

Desmond threw himself on his rustic bed, and though too much agitated to

sleep, willingly closed his aching and feverish eyes.

"He sleeps," said Connal, bending over him a few moments after: "how calm and heavenly is the sleep of youth! He is happy, for he knows but one passion: no bloody and mortal summons will wake him to the strife of life and death, of honour and shame. Desmond, those bright hairs will never be soiled with the dust of a scaffold; that young form never will meet the gaze, and rage, and curses of a rabble. Oh! there is a blessing even in evil, when it does not reach to those we love."

He then threw himself against the side of the cave, and hiding his face with his hand, remained silent. In a few moments Desmond heard him quit the cave, and by the sound discovered he was descending a flight of steps. A murmur of voices then struck his ear: they were sometimes loud, and at times winding

among the echoes of the vault, Desmond imagined he was deceived by the wild and indefinite sounds of the wind. Restless with many emotions, he rose, he listened, he examined the cavern: in one corner he observed a cavity; the light of the half-extinguished fire fell dimly on it, disclosing a flight of steps which Desmond for a moment was about to descend. As he paused irresolutely, the sounds ceased, and the last flash of light falling on the cavity, rendered it impossible for Desmond to penetrate its depth: he retreated, and his weariness both of body and mind overcoming his curiosity, he again threw himself on his bed of moss. Frequently his slumbers were broken by the sound of voices from beneath, and more than once he thought by the clash of arms.

When he awoke, the beams of morning had broke through the cavern, and Connal was sitting beside him in an attitude that shewed he had not slept all

night. Fevered, bewildered, and unrefreshed, he rose, and hastened to the entrance of the cave to cool his parched lips with the air of day. The morning, cold, calm, and grey, after the storm of night, resembled that sullen repose which the mind feels after the conflict of passion.

“What is your present plan?” said Connal, as they stood at the entrance of the cave.

“My only object last night,” said Desmond, “was to fly from this place; but I am now resolved to join my regiment: its quarters are but a few miles off, and the hurry of a military life may benumb my feelings; perhaps some welcome summons may terminate my life before it is further embittered or disgraced by a passion that I cannot resist, that I cannot even contend with.”

Connal, with the eloquence and the benignity of a ministering angel, tried to sooth and strengthen him in vain. The parting hour arrived; and wildly calling

on the name of Endymion, he stretched his arms, his eyes, his heart, towards the castle, mingling vows of everlasting fondness with resolutions of instant departure, yet still delaying his departure to repeat the vow.

“Go, Desmond,” said his brother, trembling for his stability; “go, while your resolution is yet a virtue: in a few hours it may be impelled by necessity, and then it will be virtue no longer. Go, and remember, whether tempted to weakness, or summoned to danger, you are an Irishman, and an O’Morven: however it may please heaven to dispose of your fortunes or your feelings, may your honour at least be immortal.”

A crimson flush tinged the wan cheek of Desmond, as he listened to his brother.

“I have nothing of value to give you, my Desmond; but had I all the treasures of the earth I give you more in this little volume. (He drew it from his bosom as he spoke.) The words of worldly wis-

dom are vain, and those of worldly pride vainer still: but in the conflict of passion should you ever ask of your conscience the question—Where withal shall a young man cleanse his way? it contains the answer—even by ruling himself after this word."

CHAP. V.

Yet cold in the dust at thy feet I would rather be,
Than wed what I loved not, or turn one thought
from thee.

MOORE.

THE following day gave Armida an interval for reflexion. Connal's image appeared involved in a darkness she could not penetrate: his gloomy irresolution, his vicissitudes of passion and melancholy, his flying from her while he almost worshipped, and his deferring the disclosure from night to night, while he called her the arbitress of his fate, made her tremble at this mysterious character, while she longed to develope, and dreaded the resolution which she had employed all her powers to precipitate. The day was marked by no event: Wandesford left

the castle in the morning, and this stillness increased the agitation of Armida. Wearied by that intolerable effort which confines us to society from which our hearts are worlds away, Armida thought the evening prolonged for ages. At length Lady Montclare retired, and Armida alone hurried to the spot where Connal was to meet her.

It was almost dark : the clouds of an autumnal evening mingled their grey and heavy masses with the dark ocean, a bleak wind swept along the rocks, and the sigh of the moss and the thistle as it bowed their heads, with the distant shriek of the sea-bird, were the only sounds that reminded her of life as she traversed the shore. Alone, pale and shrinking from the chill and cheerless air, how different was she now from her who hitherto respired only the brilliant and balmy air of the south, whom even their genial wind had never been suffered to visit too roughly, and whose steps had only pressed the

perfumed and velvet path of luxury. Insensible to the gloom that gathered round her, she continued to walk, in vain straining her eyes to discover through the mist a glimpse of Connal's figure. Night came on, but the agitation of her heart prevented her perceiving it: that form which could make midnight noon still hovered in her imagination, though her eyes could not discover him; and the increasing darkness, by excluding every external object, only concentrated her mind's eye on the object which filled it.

A step was heard on the heath: she started and turned, and almost before she saw him, Connal grasped her in his arms. Dark as it was, she saw with terror his distracted figure, his bare, dishevelled head, and his features, in which the sublimest expression of character contended with despair.

Her heart told her this was no meeting of love, and she in vain tried to collect voice to speak to him.

"A moment! but a moment!" cried Connal, "is allowed me to bless you, and to part."

"Oh, what is this!" cried the trembling Armida: "give me time to comprehend this terror."

"I had no time given me: treachery and hatred have destroyed me: my fate is no longer doubtful: this moment I am called to decide it by my own arm. Armida, the mercy that heaven has denied me visit you a thousand-fold—farewel!"

"Oh! do not bless me with that horrible voice," cried Armida: "stay but to tell me what is this new danger? What ——"

"There is no danger," said Connal, with a dreadful smile; "but fly before you see me perish at your feet; fly, for my arm can no longer guide or defend you."

Armida's reason failed her: she tore her hair, her shrieks echoed along the

shore, she clung to his knees; yet unable to hold them, she sunk on the ground at his feet.

“ Oh, God !” cried Connal, throwing to heaven his strained and blood-shot eyes, “ let me but bear this like a man ; let me not meet my foes bereft of all strength.”

“ Oh ! leave me not to die here,” cried Armida, writhing at his feet in her ravings ; “ a single blow will end my misery, and yet you delay, and yet you leave me to die : your hands are strong, and yet you have not the mercy to end me.”

Connal, beside himself, knelt on the ground : he attempted to raise her, but at that moment the alarm-bell rung out, and the discharge of musketry burst on his ear like thunder. He started, and through the darkness of the night he saw the flames bursting from the old tower, and spreading their burning volumes on the air.

"It blazes, it blazes," he cried in agony: "he is perishing in the flames, and I stand here fondly talking to a woman."

He tore himself from her, and she sunk on the earth.

Rosine, undismayed by the danger and terror of the night, had gone out in quest of Armida. The mist that had gathered over the heath, and the roar of the sea as it lashed the rocks, concealed every object, and drowned every effort of her voice to make herself heard.

Drenched by the rain, and breathless from struggling with the wind, she continued her dreary progress alone till the flames that issued from the burning tower, glaring widely on the dark heath, shewed something white stretched before her on the ground. She hastened forward: it was Armida, pale, motionless, and prostrate.

Struck to the soul at beholding this woman once so celebrated, and still pos-

sessing every distinction of rank, genius, and beauty, in a situation so helpless and deplorable, Rosine, almost execrating Connal, knelt beside her, and attempted to raise and revive her.

Armida recognized her voice. She recovered, and her mind overcoming her weakness, her recollection returned in a moment with her reason.

“Is this terrible dream over?” said she, with a ghastly smile; “I know you—you are Rosine: but where is Connal?”

Rosine exerted all her strength to raise and lead her from the spot, for the noise came nearer, and she could distinctly see the troops approaching by the light of the burning tower.

But all her intreaties were answered by the inquiry—“Where is Connal?”

Rosine then trembling, confessed what she had heard—that an insurrection had broke out, military law had been proclaimed, and troops had marched that evening to search the tower in which the

O'Morvens lived for concealed arms, on the information of Wandesford; and pointing to the burning ruins which the soldiers were now quitting, she implored Armida to fly from this scene of violence, before insult or danger reached them. Of all she said, Armida appeared to retain but one sentence.

Ignorant of the distracted state of Ireland, she did not comprehend the rest; her heart had room but for one image—
“And Wandesford leads the soldiers!” she cried—“Wandesford!”

“Oh! come,” cried the terrified Rosine, “come, while we can escape with safety: this is no place for unprotected women: come, or I shall not have courage to stay with you.”

Armida attempted to follow her, but before they reached the castle, her eyes caught a glimpse of the flames that sunk for a moment as the roof fell in with a horrid crash, and then rose in erect and livid spires, triumphing over the ruin.

She darted from Rosine, for her disturbed imagination presented to her the image of Connal engaged in a conflict with numbers who overpowered him.

“My hand and fortune,” she cried, grovelling on the earth in delirious agony: “my hand and fortune to the meanest wretch who will save his life; and no one,” she cried, after a pause, “no one hears, and no one will accept me; and yet they told me I was rich and beautiful; but all they told me in my youth was false, or why am I thus deserted now?”

Rosine, unable to contend with or to support her, flew to the castle for assistance, and she was at length conveyed to her apartment.

The castle and the whole country were now in a state of alarm. The report was universal that a rebellion had broke out, of which Connal was one of the principal leaders. The troops who had marched from the town where they were quartered

were now dispersed over the country searching for arms, and taking up suspected persons.

The alarm-bell of the castle rung all night, and was loudly answered by that from Lady Kilcarrick's mansion, which they could distinctly see illuminated as a beacon to the neighbourhood: the wretched inhabitants of the few cottages in the neighbourhood came flying for protection to the castle, which was now fortified as if for a siege; the draw-bridge drawn up, the windows secured, all the servants whom they could depend on armed for defence, and the family retreated to the most remote and best defended parts of the building. Lady Montclare and the priest retired trembling to the chapel, but the elder O'Morven, with something of the spirit of his family, presided at the directions given for the security of the castle, and attempted to tranquillize the family by assurances of safety.

Some of the attendants who were posted on the turrets of the castle about midnight exclaimed that they saw the king's troops scattering the rebel forces in every direction, that the tower was in ashes, and scarce a man was now to be seen on the heath. Apprehensive that the rebels in their retreat might assault the castle, the guards were doubled on every side, all the lights in the front of the building extinguished, and every preparation made on that side of the castle which was assailable from the heath : the other sides, surrounded by rocks, were impregnable to forces who wanted artillery. A few moments after an express from Wandesford arrived at the castle. He was admitted with caution, and darkened with blood, and smoke, and toil, he presented a frightful picture of the conflict to the inhabitants of the castle, who crowded around him. His first intelligence removed their fears : he announced that on

the tower where the O'Morvens lived being invested by Wandesford's regiment, a formidable body of rebels, well armed and disciplined, had appeared to defend it, but as their efforts were more directed to preserve the building than to assail the troops, they had been quickly routed, and the tower reduced to ashes. Rallying at some distance, under the conduct of an unknown leader, they had made a vigorous defence, and though half of them had been cut to pieces, and the remainder wounded, by the steady and well-directed fire of the soldiers, yet by the skilful conduct and supernatural courage of their leader, they had succeeded in securing their retreat to the recesses of a wild mountain, at the distance of two miles, from which it was impossible for the forces that had pursued to dislodge them. Here, therefore, they had paused for the night, after sending expresses in every direction for assistance, of which one,

taking the castle in his way, had stopped for a few moments to announce that their immediate danger was removed.

Rosine, who, with the trembling inhabitants of the castle, had hurried to the hall to hear the report of the express, at once comprehended the dreadful mystery of Connal's character, and not less dismayed, even for the awful events of the night than for that of Armida's ill-fated passion, she hastened to her apartment before the precipitation of some terrified domestic should disclose the intelligence.

She found Armida, though unable to quit her bed, and though every attempt to speak was convulsive, yet resolutely determined to listen and to inquire into every particular of that dreadful night.

Her total ignorance of the state of Ireland, a country of which she had never thought till she became an inmate of it, made her slow in comprehending what Rosine told her. At length she seemed to understand it all, and hiding her face,

she sunk back on the bed in silence. Rosine tried to give her the hope she wanted herself, by intimating that this unknown leader might perhaps be some stranger.

Armida shook her head incredulously: "Ah! that super-human courage," said she, "can belong to but one man on earth. Oh!" she added after a pause, "Oh! that I had beheld him on the dark mountain's side, when he gathered his broken band, and told the proud tide of pursuit—hitherto shalt thou go, and no further.

"And I shall see him," she murmured, "I shall see him there."

"Armida," cried Rosine, believing her again delirious, "what can you mean by those words?"

"To follow him," said Armida, speaking with difficulty, but with perfect decision, to follow this fugitive, this out-cast, this rebel to the mountain, to the end of the earth."

Rosine long expecting this fatal resolution, heard it now without surprise, but not without grief and horror: "Oh! Armida," she cried, bursting into tears, "how can you, nursed in pomp and luxury, talk of following the desperate fortunes of a rebel leader: the wind of heaven was not suffered to visit you roughly in your youth, and how will you bear the storm in its fury?"

"Rosine," said Armida, faintly but resolutely, "do not weep for me, I am past the kindness of friends: let me be forgotten by the world, I shall never embellish it more. I am no longer the ambitious sparkling female who lived only to the world and to fame: I am a woman overcome by passion and destiny: I am embarked in a wreck, yet I do not cast one look toward the shore."

Rosine continued to weep and to supplicate, but Armida interrupted her.

"I have nothing now to require of you, Rosine, but secrecy: perhaps

your principles may oppose this ; you may think it your duty to betray me, but I warn you it will be in vain : I do not want resolution, and I cannot want the means to execute it long : alas ! I feel I am strong only in despair ; had life any charms for me I should value it more."

During the remainder of the night she was frequently and alarmingly ill, but at every interval of ease she recurred to her purpose, and spoke of it with a calmness, that while it removed Rosine's apprehensions for her reason, awoke others even more dreadful.

Almost as soon as it was light she rose, and with incredible exertions prepared to meet the family, who had none of them been in bed all night ; and now assembled, at the first dawn of morning, were anxiously waiting the arrival of an express from Wandesford.

The danger and terror of their present situation seemed to concentrate all their different and opposite feelings into one

mass of gloom and apprehension. Little was said except by O'Morven, who, equally regardless of the fate of one son, and the absence of the other, seemed, like all his countrymen, to feel his spirits raised by the approach of danger, and displayed that mixture of spirit and unfeelingness that is common to them all.

The day was past in wandering silently from room to room, viewing the country from the casements in the turrets, which being beyond the reach of assault, were not secured; in vain exploring the bleak and empty heath for the sight of the military party they expected to be quartered in the castle for its defence, and at times listening to the heavy roll of the waves, whose sound they imagined the discharge of distant artillery.

Evening at length arrived, doubling the terrors of which she who felt the most had spoken the least, when the arrival of a party of soldiers was announced

by the servants who were stationed on the turrets of the castle : the intelligence they brought removed their immediate fears, though they represented the disturbance as much more serious than was at first imagined.

The rebels had in the night broke from their retreat in the mountains, and attacking the troops that pursued them, repulsed them with considerable loss : a strong detachment, commanded by a general officer, had marched that morning from Galway against them, and Wandersford's party, who had suffered so severely in the engagement and pursuit, were returning to their former quarters in the neighbourhood. He himself had been slightly wounded, and purposed if his presence was not necessary at the scene of action to return to the castle and make that his quarters for a few days. Intelligence had been sent to Dublin to apprise government of the state of the country, and troops were marching in

every direction to their assistance ; but they had not yet been able to discover that any disturbance had existed in the adjacent counties, or that there was any connexion between this and the rebellion of 1798. It seemed like Emmet's insurrection, the isolated and hopeless attempt of a single enthusiast.

Orders had just been given on the admission of the soldiers to secure the castle for the night, and O'Morven and Morosini were gone to inspect its execution, when a carriage was heard driving rapidly into the court, and in a moment Lady Kilcarrick rushed into the room in an agony of distress. In this hour of terror, the sight of distress produced instant sympathy, and though every one disliked her, they all gathered round her with expressions of concern.

" Oh ! Lady Montclare," she exclaimed, " my child, my Gabriella : oh ! that villain, that monster ; he has torn her from me, dragged her away to shame and ruin,

carried her off to those wild horrid mountains, to live with ruffians and rebels, and with himself, the worst of them all."

"Whom do you speak of?" cried Lady Montclare with unfeigned amazement.

"Whom! why Connal O'Morven; [he has seduced my child; taken her from me: my Gabriella—my child, whose rank and beauty and accomplishments might have entitled her to the first families in Ireland: oh! the honour and comfort of my age is gone; I am ruined and undone for ever: oh! that he had the mercy to kill me before he had done this. I hope I may live to see him on the highest gibbet in the country, like a rebel and a villain as he is. As old as I am, I hope to see that day, and so I will ere long, if grief does not kill me."

Lady Montclare, whom even danger could not divest of art, loudly joined in her lamentations and invectives, while Rosine, thunder-struck at this intelligence, of which it was impossible to doubt, sat

bereft for some moments of all reflexion, and when at length she raised her eyes to look for relief on those around her, she perceived Armida had quitted the room without uttering a word. She rose mechanically to follow her, yet when she reached the door, she retreated and sat down in that sick and hopeless state of mind in which we seem no longer to know good from evil, in which characters change before us like figures in a dream, and the landmarks of life appear to be removed from their places.

She was startled from her reverie by the sound of Armida's steps—she then ventured to enter: Armida was walking up and down the room rapidly but silently: her step was firm, and but that her hair hung loosely on her shoulders, there was not even a trace of emotion in her figure.

In a few moments she was astonished to see her approach a glass, calmly arrange her hair, and throwing on her

veil, advance to the door: then Rosine ventured to inquire where she was going.

"The air of this room oppresses me," said Armida, evidently speaking with difficulty, "and I think I can only breathe in the open air."

The passages of the castle that opened on the sea-shore had not been secured like the rest, for in that direction no danger was apprehended, and they reached the rocky terrace, where Armida so often walked without observation.

Rosine, as they walked along, placed herself instinctively on the side next the sea; and though it was twilight, she saw Armida's haughty smile of contempt at this involuntary movement. The night advanced; it became dark and cold; and the spray of the sea reached them, wetting their light garments at every step; yet Armida continued to walk till it was totally dark, and then, as if she had waited for it, she hastily traversed that

side of the terrace, and descending, entered on the heath.

Rosine, now forced by her fears to speak, mentioned the intelligence of the day, and the probability that some stragglers from the rebel camp might be in the neighbourhood.

Armida walked on swiftly, without appearing to hear, but at length she said :—

“What were you saying of the rebel forces?”

Rosine mentioned the loss they had sustained, and the strong party ordered against them.

“Their leader is bold and brave,” said Armida, “but conscience will subdue the boldest.”

And she continued to proceed so swiftly that Rosine could hardly keep pace with her.

As they passed the ruins of the tower, which were nearly a mile from the castle,

no longer able to suppress her terrors, she exclaimed:—

“ Good Heaven ! Armida, where are you going ? or what is it you purpose to do ? Alone at night, and in a country like this, what will become of us should we meet with danger ? ”

“ We are so wretched,” said Armida, with a soul-drawn sigh, “ that no one will injure us.”

“ Do you know where we are ? ” said Rosine, as she tottered through the fragments of the tower : “ here has been death but a few hours past. Do you see the darkness ? do you hear the storm ? and yet this is nothing to what we may meet.”

“ There is no difference between day and night to me, between storm and calm,” said Armida ; “ it is all the same, or will be soon.”

“ Oh ! Armida, I can follow you no longer ; this frightful language terrifies

me more than even night and our forlorn situation. Oh! Armida, before you leave me dying with terror, think where you are going, and what is it you purpose."

"I know not where I am going or what I intend," said Armida, pausing, and wringing her hands in the extreme of suffering: "if my strength does not fail me, I will hear my doom from his own lips. A last appeal to his heart, even if it should end in my death, will be better than thus dying by inches away from him, and listening to reports that tear me to pieces like demons. Perhaps when he sees me he will not deny compassion to the dying hour of the woman he has destroyed."

She still continued to hurry onward, and Rosine now followed implicitly, terrified to proceed, yet more terrified to return alone: she felt as if Armida's fate at last governed her's.

As they passed the ruins of the tower,

the moon broke faintly through the clouds, tinting its grey fragments with a sepulchral light, and revealing the long track of bleak and barren heath that lay before them.

As they hastened on, with a speed far above the strength of either, they beheld the mossy stones and the withered ash-tree under which but two nights before Armida remembered her fate had been announced by the aged harper. This sight overcame her, and tottering towards it she sunk on the stones, and supported her head against the trunk of the tree.

“Alas!” she cried, “is this the first omen of my disastrous journey. Here woe and death were announced to me, and my heart verifies the prediction. Ah! with what hope can a woman support herself who goes to revive passion that never felt, or soon forgot it. These stones are not more cold than his heart, these branches are not more withered

than mine. How different was I even the last sad night I was on this spot: then the gloomy prediction I heard terrified me, but it did not destroy all self-confidence, nor did it make me doubt him. How vast is the interval between even our worst fears, and the actual burthen of evil when it arrives."

Rosine, though weeping too, seized this moment of calm to represent the danger, the terror, and the desperation of her present enterprize; the improbability of meeting the leader of a rebel army amid inaccessible mountains, and the still greater, that amid scenes of tumult and horror such as he was now involved in he would listen to or feel for her.

"Ah!" said Armida, her voice growing fainter and her cheek paler at every word, "that is all I wish for; let me hear my fate from his own lips if he can pronounce it: perhaps he will be spared even that trouble, if the old man's pro-

phesy should be true : if I perish here," she added, leaning her cold cheek on Rosine's breast, " let it be told that life and fortune courted me in vain, for my heart was on the dark hill's side with Connal."

So shrunk was her form, so broken her voice, that Rosine believed her actually dying, and in her terror screamed aloud for assistance, though conscious none was near.

Yet affrighted as she was, her terrors were increased by the sound of approaching footsteps, and she would have given the world to be again left to the solitude she dreaded so much a moment before.

The steps approached slowly, but distinctly, and she now attempted to rouse Armida, and if possible excite her to escape, or conceal themselves from those who were passing the heath.

It was too late : two figures visibly approached, but there was nothing menacing in their attitude : it was a man and

woman; his arm was thrown soothingly around her, and she leaned on him with an air of softness and submission: they advanced: the light of the moon fell strongly on their figures. The man was Connal, the woman Gabriella. They were conversing in a low voice, but of their conversation nothing could be heard but the tenderness of tone and expression in which it was murmured.

They passed near the spot, but Armida and Rosine were in the shade; and as they crossed the heath near this desolate pair, they seemed like spirits going to bliss, whose bright journey leads them for an instant near the abode of final woe.

The steady light discovered them but too plainly to the wretched Armida: under the impulse of despair she stretched out her arms to him; she tried to call on his name in tones that would have pierced his soul, but she had no voice; a deep sigh, like that preceding dissolu-

tion, burst from her heart, and she sunk into the arms of Rosine.

"Was that a vision we saw?" she cried, after a long pause, raising her eyes fearfully to Rosine. "And am I here," she cried, "wandering like an outcast, alone at night, hazarding reputation and life for a man who leaves me to perish." She stretched her arm with wild emotion towards Connal.

"I would have knelt at your feet, I would have died at them," she cried; "but I shall save you the guilt of spurning me. May you never know the heart you have rejected. Alas! you will know too soon her whom you have preferred."

As they returned to the castle, a number of lights and a crowd of soldiers and domestics at the gate announced the return of Wandesford.

Armida, now well acquainted with the windings of the rocks, pursued another direction, and in the tumult that

accompanied the arrival of Wandesford they reached her apartment without discovery.

She eagerly threw off her wet garments, and Rosine saw with astonishment that she even took some pains to arrange her dress and her dishevelled hair: she dreaded some new convulsion of passion, and followed her, unable to speak, to the apartment where the family, even at this late hour, had gathered round Wandesford, to listen at last to authentic intelligence.

At Armida's appearance he bowed slightly and continued his conversation, which was principally addressed to Lady Montclare.

He described the force and astonishing efforts of the rebels; spoke moderately of his own conduct; but appeared to think that the danger, though remote, was by no means over.

The scenes in which he had been engaged had excited his spirit, which was

naturally daring, and the consciousness of his own distinguished conduct gave a degree of dignity to his manner, for nothing exalts a man so much in the presence of women as the knowledge that his character for courage has preceded him.

Lady Montclare, who heard with horror that the rebels had entrenched themselves in the mountains, and that the country would probably continue disturbed for the remainder of the winter, as their inaccessible situation completely defied military force, now tremblingly inquired if it were possible for them to be safer in Galway, or any town where a military force was stationed, during the winter.

"It is my advice," said Wandesford, "that your ladyship and the family should immediately quit the castle, and fix your residence in Galway or Loughrea, as in this remote castle you will be exposed to the incursions of the rebels.

I will undertake for your safe conduct to any place where you may fix your residence. I can still undertake for your protection: once," he added, "I had hoped to urge a more tender claim, but that I must now endeavour to forget."

Every one was silent; but Armida, collecting all her strength to meet this crisis of her fate, said faintly:—

"Do you then wish to forget it?"

The haughty soul of Wandesford could not resist the triumph of this moment, and he answered:—

"At least I wish to forget the competitor for whom I was dismissed."

"Oh! mention not his name," said Armida, with an impulse she could not resist, "if you would have me listen to you."

"I will forget him as willingly as you," said Wandesford; "I will forget every thing but the hopes those delicious words revive. Armida, what am I to understand from them?"

"If you are willing to understand me," said Armida, in vain forcing her features to assume a sickly and heart-forbidden smile of encouragement, "I have said enough, and if you are not I have said too much."

She held out her shrinking hand to him, and Wandesford, seizing it, began to pour forth the most rapturous acknowledgments; yet, even at this moment, the hand of the first of her sex did not give him such pleasure as the triumph of his proud and vindictive heart announced over the man he hated.

"Oh, spare me," cried Armida, breaking from him, "spare me; I cannot bear this; I do not deserve it; it is not in my nature to deceive: if you can accept of an alienated heart it is your's; your generosity has already taught it gratitude, and time may teach it esteem, and even give it peace."

Unequal to any further effort, she

retired to her apartment, but Wandersford, in spite of his fatigue and his wounds, continued to sit and consult with Lady Montclare for the remainder of the night.

CHAP. VI.

“ She pined in thought,
And sat like patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief.”

For some days Wandesford supported the character of an assiduous and happy lover, but his pride could wear the mask no longer. The artless complacency with which Armida received his attentions irritated him the more, as it left no room for complaint, and the consciousness of not being loved is that sensation of all others which makes us the most anxious to seek for the evidence of what we fear.

Letters now arrived from England, from his mother and his uncle, Sir Edgar Etheling Wandesford (the oldest and proudest baronet in England), intreating

him immediately to quit Ireland, and solemnize his marriage at the old family seat in England.

Lady Montclare eagerly pressed him to comply with their advice, mentioning that Endymion and she would fix their residence in Galway for the winter, and Rosine might accompany Armida to England. Wandesford, whose regiment was now off duty, and who was anxious to convey Armida from Ireland as soon as possible, embraced the proposal, and it was settled that they should quit the castle the moment they could with safety.

Armida was present at their conference: she listened to every thing, assented to every thing, and heard or understood nothing. Her mind, fixed on the one great effort of making the sacrifice that approached with silent dignity, had no room for its details; and if she had a wish at this moment, it was to be away from Ireland, for every express brought accounts of the heroism with which the

rebel leader kept his little band together, in the centre of a bleak mountain, amid winter, famine, and the foe; of the conduct with which he had hitherto repelled the approach of disciplined troops; and of the humanity with which, amid all his hardships, he protected the peasantry from the aggressions of his fierce and mutinous forces.

Winter had approached with unusual severity, and all its gloom seemed concentrated in the castle.—The inquietude of Lady Montclare became daily more obvious, and at length declaring that the severity of the season must preclude all danger on the part of the insurgents, she announced her resolution of quitting the castle the following week, and pressed Wandesford to fix his departure on the same day. Wandesford, who had protracted his stay only with the hope of torturing Armida with Connal's fate, was obliged to comply. Servants were dispatched to clear the roads, which were

almost impassable from the snow, and a party of Wandesford's regiment was appointed to escort them.

But during this interval of preparation, like Satan, knowing his time was short, his rage and malignity were increased tenfold, and Armida's resolution was hourly tried to the utmost.

On one of those melancholy days, while Rosine and she were sitting together enjoying the dreary consolation of silence, he broke into the room, and taking out a letter he had just received, began to read aloud an exaggerated account of the sufferings of the rebels, with a sanguinary denunciation against Connal, containing a copy of the reward offered for his apprehension. Armida, on whom he fixed his eyes with savage triumph, grew pale, but did not utter a word; but Rosine, whose spirit was roused by this unmanly persecution, said indignantly, "Are you a man?"

"Yes," replied Wandesford, with a

brutal oath, "and a man that will not be governed by a woman that defies either their art to defeat, or their insolence to disturb him."

Rosine, not trusting herself with the answer that rose to her lips, quitted the room, and Armida was about to follow her, till hearing the rude laugh with which Wandesford was pursuing her retreat, she calmly resumed her seat.

"Is this your resolution; is this the self-command with which you flattered yourself and me?" said Wandesford, striding up and down the room to work himself into a passion. "You cannot contain your emotion at that ruffian's name: instead of execrating him you are at this moment ready to weep, and nothing but your infernal pride restrains your tears. What hope can I have of the confidence, what security for the honour of a woman thus debased by passion?"

"Mention not honour or confidence," said Armida, struggling with her emo-

tion; "you have violated both. I could not expect sensibility from you, but I have at least deserved respect: I had no reserve: I exposed my heart to you—I laid it at your feet—I did not conceal its weakness or its wounds; and you have trampled on it, and stabbed it."

"The hearts of your whole sex," said Wandesford, furiously, "are not worth the earth I tread: you have no heart. you have nothing but pride, caprice, and desire. While the first men in Europe were at your feet you spurned them. My honourable addresses, the addresses of a man of the first family, fortune, and character were despised; but the moment you saw this Irishman, this heir of the poverty, and pride, and infamy of his country, you rushed into his arms, though he dashed you from them. Perhaps his figure awoke your classical taste, and you wished to transfer your study, like the statuary of old, from marble to flesh."

Armida was indignantly retiring, but he detained her by force. "Mark me! by Heaven, I am not lamenting the discovery of your worthlessness!—no, I rejoice in it; but I will make such use of it as will effectually secure my honour, and your repentance, if not your reformation. I will watch your very soul: I will sift your every word; I will be an Argus on your conduct, and an interpreter of your very eyes."

"Hold, sir!" said Armida, with a look that awed and silenced even him, "and let me remind you of your only security, my own honour: at this moment it enables me to despise your menaces, as at every future one it will to defy them."

He relinquished the arm he had rudely seized, and walked sullenly away, ashamed of the conviction it had forced on him.

"But let me warn you, Colonel Wandesford," she continued, leaning on her seat to support her trembling frame, "that, unless you intend to defeat your

own power, you will not again thus venture to abuse it."

"What!" said Wandesford, starting at her last words, "do you then intend to retreat from your engagements?"

"Oh, no!" said Armida, smiling with high disdain: "Oh, no, thou honourable lover! I will fulfil the bond: my person and fortune will be your's: you shall bear about this wretched, faded figure, in all the heartless pageantry of splendid misery; but take care that even before your victim is bound she does not escape."

"And who can take you from me now?" said Wandesford, with a mixture of rancour and fear.

"There is a hand even stronger than your's: I think while I am speaking to you I feel it on my heart: its touch warns me that my present sufferings will last me all my life, but will not last too long."

She retired to her apartment, which she

did not quit till the night preceding that fixed for their departure for England. During the interval, Rosine frequently entered her apartment, and always found her employed in writing : she never spoke, or even raised her head ; and Rosine retired silently as she entered.

But on that evening, after having made her own brief preparation for the journey, unable to bear the still and ominous gloom of her apartment, and the silence of the castle, only broken by the half-heard step of a hurrying domestic, she went at a late hour to Armida's apartment : she found her in a travelling dress, and prepared to sit up all night, as the carriages were to be ready in a few hours. A large packet lay on the table before her : she looked at it for some time, and then said calmly, " Take those papers, my dear Rosine : let them meet no eye but your's. It is no superstition that dictates to me this journey will be my last : once I had hoped that admiration,

not pity, would have accompanied my departure from life. Alas! I now feel that nothing but my sufferings will survive me."

Rosine took the papers; but on her return to her apartment she found it impossible to retire to sleep. The castle clock had struck two; at six their dreary journey was to commence. The snow that drifted against the casements obscured all view from them; and the hollow sweeping of the wintry wind making her thoughts every moment more gloomy, she revived her dying fire, and sat down to examine the papers that lay on her table. Yet often as the storm beat strongly against the walls, and imagination formed other sounds within her desolate chamber, she dropped the papers, and mentally exclaimed—"Is this the preparation for a bridal journey!"

*Armida's thoughts since the departure
of Connal.*

“ These are the last lines I shall probably write, and there is but one human eye they will ever meet : thus the last efforts of a mind once destined to celebrity will be lost, like itself, in oblivion ; and this consideration presses on my mind even at the moment when I believed but one thought could reach or move it. How much was expected from me !—how much was bestowed on me !—and how little have I done.

“ The grave where he lies could not more effectually convict my poor father of the vanity of his fondness than if he could behold his darling Armida now.”

* * * * *

“ Alas ! how different are the impressions we receive from imagination and passion. Educated in a celestial climate, where every object excited the mind and senses, my young and ardent mind re-

lected every image presented to it brighter than the original : every effort I made to express my sensations increased them ; the images multiplied, the language coloured and kindled as I spoke, and the praises I received won the race for me before it was concluded. But now my imagination is gone : an object without dimensions and without colour seems to occupy my mind's eye : I want strength to conceive the extent of my misery : when I would speak of it, I have no words ; when I would paint it, the picture is black, and a voice from the bottom of my heart tells me death alone can penetrate or express the depth of feeling there."

* * * * *

" Any one that remembered me would advise me to apply to my former resources, and tell me that one like me could never want means to occupy his mind and time. Alas ! I feel that a common mind would not feel half my wretchedness.

Calypso, when she was deserted, felt the consciousness of her immortality and genius a curse—and the eternal verdure of her isle was a reproach to the desolation of her heart.”

* * * * *

“I may say in the language of the Eastern fable—I am a ruined building, and he is the architect.”

* * * * *

Alas ! had this sacrifice been made for him, with what triumph would I have sunk into obscurity, with what delight would I have given up my talents, as the deities are said to put off the rays that surround them when they stoop to a favoured mortal. But when we make a sacrifice without consolation and without praise, our own hearts begin to doubt their motives, and the exertion of the sublimest energy, wanting its honour, almost loses its reality.”

* * * * *

“That luxury of the imagination and

senses, to which I was accustomed, has long ceased, and I resign it without a murmur, but not without life can I resign the luxuries of passion and the heart."

* * * * *

"Even at this moment of desolation I cannot envy Gabriella: she could not have won him by any thing that had alliance with the passions of the heart, or greatness of mind: I could not stoop to her art even for him: I never employed the art of woman, I had no occasion for it, but if I had a superior mind, how wretchedly has it been appreciated. Often in my own heart I read my epitaph, as if it was inscribed by an invisible: she whom he left to perish deserved him better than she whom he preferred.—But, alas! the place to which his perfidy is hurrying me fast annihilates pride as well as love."

* * * * *

"How often in the day I think I hear

the sound of his voice: how often I watch for his light and rapid step, and when I turn and see only vacancy——”

* * * * *

“ A lingering of my former character has made me wish even in these pages to produce something worthy of myself: impossible! the passion that takes away our minds takes away language too, and denies us the relief that ordinary distress extorts by its very clamour.”

* * * * *

“ It consoles me that his crime was committed against me alone, and I forgive him.

“ To me his image still appears in that dazzling and cruel perfection, that seems to throw the blame of desertion from him, and makes me accuse myself instead of him.

“ Ah! what are his talents and virtues to me: what avails it to me that his name will one day set the page of history on fire, if it only speaks death

to me. He is gone to make a new era in the history of man, and who will pause in writing the story to tell that he left the woman that loved him to perish. The storm that fertilizes a country crushes the rose and violet into dust."

* * * * *

"My sufferings are great, for there is no commiseration for them; no one pities the victim of sensibility and passion.

"Every one can commiserate the ordinary calamities of life, because they are within the reach of ordinary conceptions, but is it ever in the power of circumstances to make us as wretched as our own hearts can.

"I am still young and wealthy, and therefore the world will laugh, and tell me I must be happy.

"Alas! were I old, indigent, and destitute, I should perhaps meet with

compassion; but should I so certainly die of a broken heart."

* * * * *

"Sometimes I wish to balance my sufferings by the pleasure his image once gave me; but I cannot: in vain I sit for hours trying to recall it: of the innumerable graces of his figure I have not at times the slightest recollection — chance, not thought, restores them to me, and I repeat to myself the name of Connal a thousand times a day, without a distinct idea annexed to the name."

* * * * *

"Gracious heaven! how could he thus drive to despair the woman that loved him as I did; is he really depraved and unfeeling, or am I with all my talents and passion unable even to inspire pity. Alas! it is the fate of woman always to do too much or too little; perhaps the powers I was so anxious to display

wearied and disgusted him: men of the most powerful minds, it is said, admire females of a contrary character; but did he not see it was love, not vanity, that prompted me, and that my talents were displayed not to demand homage, but to offer it."

* * * * *

"I have a sensation in my inmost heart like a burning thirst, incessant and intolerable; but the water to quench it can no where be found on earth."

* * * * *

"When I lie down at night, my imagination, even in sleep, is tinged with the gloom of that scenery in which I first beheld him: I dream of heath and moor, of ruins and moonlight; my feet stumble on the dark mountains, and when I awake, I am further than ever from him."

* * * * *

"I wish that night I went in quest of

him I had been carried dying into his presence, that he might have said :—
 “She is not what she was when I beheld her first.”

* * * * *

“My fate is hard : many complain of difficulties in life, which their prudence or their resolution might remove : how could I have contended with circumstances.

“The world, its events, and its characters, were as dust beneath my feet. But his heart is changed ; his heart is turned against me : in those few words my destiny is written as with a pen of adamant ; I am bound with a chain whose corrosions prey on my heart like vultures, whose iron enters the soul. His heart is changed, and what remains for me. I am so out of charity with myself, that I no longer wonder no one loves me.”

* * * * *

“My wretchedness sometimes forces

me to look abroad, and observe a fate similar to my own.—When a woman ceases to love, she ceases to love the whole world; no pursuit can interest, no human being can please her.

“ Man has enough to do in life; he can embroil himself in its tumults; he can forget himself in its pleasures; but woman, born for passion, if she ceases to love ceases to live.

“ Love to man is like a flower that he steps out of his path for a moment to gather: he is pleased with it; he gazes on its beauty; he inhales its fragrance, and flings it away to wither. But woman, like the Persian Peri, feeds on its odorous essence, and feeds on it alone, or dies.

“ Yes, I feel it; all that agitates or embellishes life is over with me; nothing disturbs, nothing touches, nothing awakes me: like the ancient cities of Italy, the burning tide of passion and despair has

passed over me, and art and genius, the picture, the song, and the landscape, sleep below for ever."

* * * * *

"My talents are gone, the impulse that pride and flattery once gave them was worn away by repetition.

"Passion succeeded, and—oh! how brilliant and eternal seems that light with which genius irradiates the new world of love. In his presence, I could have been all that has been fancied of a muse or a grace. But he is gone, and I am nothing; like the children of Israel, on their march from Egypt, he has taken the jewels of silver and of gold, and left the first-born of my heart dead within me."

* * * * *

"The bitterest conviction that can come to the heart of woman reached mine. A younger and a fairer than me has won him:—alas! what can I oppose to nature and to youth, to the

vivid and celestial bloom of eighteen, warm with the first light of passion: whatever graces I possessed were intellectual; it was taste, it was imagination, that gave expression to my figure.

“And when her bloom is fled, what will she retain. But what can be more fugitive than the boasted powers of mind: will the glow of her form be as soon lost as that of my mind? A younger and fairer than me has won him, and though every deserted woman may complain like me, yet my destiny seems strange, it seems to unfold a new page in human suffering, though I have but to add my name to that of myriads, who have traced it like me with a dying hand.”

* * * * *

“As great as my sufferings are, I dread still more the moment when they shall cease, when I shall think of him no more.”

* * * * *

At this moment Rosine, who had often paused to weep, heard the voice of Wandesford, and in a few moments the hurrying steps of servants announced their approaching departure.

She concealed the papers, and hurried to Armida's apartment, who, standing silently amid her attendants, appeared to witness the preparations as she would those for her approaching death.

Lady Montclare now entered, and after a cold embrace, and an unanswered inquiry for the unfortunate Endymion, who did not appear, they descended to the hall: Wandesford was waiting with loud impatience for them.

As Rosine crossed the immense gothic hall, the darkness, the dim lights, and the looks of the half-awakened servants, faintly appearing in its wide extent, seemed to her to resemble a funeral procession to a vault.

Shuddering with cold and terror, she placed herself in the carriage: the roads

had been cleared, and attended by a strong party, their gloomy journey was performed in safety and silence, and about noon they arrived at Loughrea.

CHAP. VII.

How far is't called to Fores. What are these
So withered and so wild in their attire.

SHAKESPEARE.

ON their arrival at Loughrea, Wandesford learned that Banagher was but twenty miles further, and that when they reached it they would be out of Connaught; and in spite of a tremendous snow-storm, and the remonstrances of the people at the inn, he determined to press forward and reach it if possible before evening. Armida and Rosine made no resistance. The soldiers were dismissed, as the part of the country they had now to travel through was perfectly tranquil, and after a slight refreshment, they again set off about two, menaced on every side by the state

of the elements and of the country. The sun set: the country was one bleak expanse of snow, intersected by tracts of bog, to which the unfrozen water gave a dusky hue; and the sky, livid and lowering with the pallid gloom of winter, seemed to denounce all its terrors against the travellers. Armida, throwing herself back in the carriage, and covering her face with her handkerchief, kept a profound silence; and Wandesford appeared to be asleep. Rosine, left to herself, involuntarily threw her eyes on the dim prospect around her, and better acquainted with the country than either of her fellow-travellers, she soon discovered that it was not the road to Leinster they were passing, as that would long since have led them through Killimer and Eyrecourt.

With difficulty she roused Wandesford, and made him comprehend that the driver must have mistaken the road. Wandesford, with a peal of oaths, stop-

ping the carriage, demanded of the man where he was : he at first persisted that he was right, and that they were now near Banagher, but after a short examination of the country, he confessed he had lost the track ; and blaming Wandesford for forcing him to pursue the journey at such an hour, and in such weather, refused to proceed further without information. Rosine, during the debate, examined the country still more closely, and in spite of the darkness, discovered with horror that they were in the very part of it which was infested by rebels ; this discovery she did not communicate, but her silence only increased her fears. The driver, urged by Wandesford's execrations, proceeded a few yards further ; but the horses then suddenly stopped, and he declared that their restiveness proceeded from their intuitive sense of some danger, which the darkness of the night prevented him from discovering. Wandesford, now compell-

ed to exert some degree of reflection, ordered the carriage which followed with Armida's female attendants to precede them cautiously, and in a few minutes they learned the dreadful necessity of the precaution. A horrible crash, accompanied by the plunging of the drowning horses, and the screams of the unfortunate women, compelled them to stop.

Wandesford, unwilling to encounter the inclemency of the night, still urged the driver on, and slowly the half-frozen horses dragged on a few steps further, and heavily the carriage followed through the deep roads, sinking up to the nave of the wheels at every step; till Armida and Rosine, terrified at the fate of the unfortunate women, and trembling for their own, insisted on quitting the carriage, and seeking some shelter even on foot. They alighted, and called aloud on the sufferers: no voice answered them: the shrill wind bore their voices far away.

and the outriders, half-blinded by the snow, and frozen almost to their saddles, could give them no information: they had seen the carriage suddenly disappear: they had heard the cry of those within it, but they knew no more.

The horror that sat on every countenance was rendered more ghastly by the light that played over the horizon. There was no moon; but the quick and vivid coruscations of the sky, revealing nothing but snow and heath, seemed to appear only to mock their terrors. During a long interval of their disappearance, Rosine discovered a light at a vast distance, whose dim but steady ray was soon distinguished by the rest of the party; and thither they determined to turn their course, and if possible to procure assistance for their unfortunate attendants, and shelter for themselves.

The servants again mounting their horses, proceeded cautiously; and Armida and Rosine followed in the car-

riage, till the inequalities of the road, never intended for the passage of vehicles, compelled them again to quit it, and sometimes supported by, but oftener shrinking from the oaths and impatience of Wandesford, they attempted to follow the direction of the light.

With incredible difficulty they at length reached a large desolate building, which stood without office or improvement near it, alone on the heath. The light disappeared as they approached it, and their loud applications for admission produced nothing but their own echo. At length a voice from within inquired their business : they demanded admission and shelter for the night, and were told there was no accommodation within ; that it was a deserted house, inhabited only by an occasional tenant, and in the disturbed state of the country the inmates were afraid to admit travellers at that unseasonable hour. Wandesford, in a fury, commanded the servants to break

open the door; and the people within, apparently terrified by his violence, after a muttering consultation between themselves consented to admit them: the light re-appeared, and the harsh and grating bars of the door were slowly withdrawn.

A man and woman stood at the door: famine, want, and wickedness, were painted in the most lurid colours on their faces, and the miserable blue light they held darkened the expression while it revealed it. The features of the man were rendered wilder by a grim smile, as he viewed the figure of Armida, and her superb, though soiled dress.

The party hurried through the large damp hall, and, uninvited, entered an apartment, which, though little less dreary, was illuminated by an immense turf fire burning on the hearth. Their grim hosts gave them no welcome; and even while reviving their chilled limbs at the fire, they stared round them with

terror at the damp, dripping walls, the broken floor, the black ceiling, and the vast, shapeless, creaking blocks that seemed not to have been put to the use of chairs, for half a century since they were made. Some brown bread and whiskey were on the table, of which, after a long silence, they were sullenly invited to partake, and on their refusal, the people, who seemed to think all claim on their attention was over, lounged gloomily against the window, surveying their guests with looks of murky inquietude, which they tenfold returned with looks of dismay.

Rosine, as one of the jarring doors moved behind her with every blast that howled round the house, caught a view of a number of arms deposited in the next room : she had resolution enough to conceal a discovery that she felt could do no good, but she felt her terror intolerable from that moment.

After a sullen pause, the man turned

to the window as if to examine the weather, and then with his back turned to them, said: "There will be a moon in less than an hour, and you had better pursue your journey."

"We don't know where to go," said Wandesford as sullenly, "and considering the little accommodation we trouble you for, you can afford to spare it somewhat longer."

"If you do not like it," said the man, "the sooner you quit it the better."

The woman gave him a look, as much as to say, we had better keep them as long as we can; but he repelled her by an angry motion, and Rosine, astonished at a degree of inhospitality from which the poorest Irish cottager would have revolted, could not reconcile it with the apparent poverty of the people, and the liberal compensation they might expect from the appearance and equipage of the travellers.

The servants, who had found a shed for the carriage and horses, now returned to request a light and some assistance to discover the rest of the party, and the man went muttering with them.

The woman remained: the same dead and chilling silence continued. Armida leaned exhausted on the shoulder of Rosine, and Wandesford strode up and down the room, grumbling curses between his closed teeth.

Heavy steps were now heard approaching the room, and two men suddenly entered it, who starting at the sight of the strangers, retired to the other end of the room: the woman spoke to them in Irish, but they did not seem to heed her, and conversed together in whispers. As Wandesford crossed the room, his eye suddenly caught theirs: he started, and stifling an exclamation that seemed to partake of hatred and terror, he threw himself in his chair, and spread his hand-

kerchief over his face. One of the men then rose, and placed himself opposite Wandesford, as if determined to meet his look ; and Wandesford, who felt from his steps he was near him, seemed forced by some invisible power to raise himself and meet his eye. The man grinned and nodded at him with horrid significance, and Rosine, roused by this extraordinary scene, observed with terror their countenances thus fixed on each other, glaring with the paleness of malignity and fear. Unable any longer to bear her fears alone, she touched Armida, who raised her head, and they interchanged looks of alarm, but they had no time for conjectural terror, for the other man rising, they both seized Wandesford, and with loud curses, they attempted to drag him from the room.

Wandesford struggled with his utmost strength, uttering the most dreadful cries for assistance, vainly echoed by Armida

and Rosine, who, screaming and mad with horror, expected to see him murdered before their eyes.

His strength encreased by despair, he resisted them at first, till the female fury held the lighted candle to his hands, with which he had grasped the table. He was then torn away: the woman followed, and Armida and Rosine, who had sunk on the floor together, were left alone. Gasping, almost senseless, and clinging to each other for the support which neither could give, they did not dare to raise their heads, to speak, or even to breathe for some minutes. A loud noise at the door roused them, and they recognised the voice of one of the servants demanding admittance.

"The door is locked," said Rosine; "I heard them fasten it as they went out."

"Try to escape by the window, my lady," said the man, in a voice of

terror : " I cannot assist you, and there is no good meant you here."

The terrified women examined the windows, but they found them all secured beyond their strength, and the man felt from their silence the trial was in vain.

" Ah !" cried Armida, sinking again on the ground, " Connal is not here to save us."

" Where is Colonel Wandesford ?" said Rosine, almost afraid to listen to the answer.

" I saw them drag him from the house, my lady," said the man : " they said they would not do his business here."

" Gracious heaven !" cried Armida, " then they will murder him."

" Oh ! Edward, if these people are banditti, tell them I have articles of value, tell them I have jewels in my possession : I will give them every thing ; I will make them rich for life, if they will let us escape without insult and danger."

" Ah ! my lady, they took care to find that out themselves," said the man, " for they are now busy plundering the carriage ; but they said all their business was with Colonel Wandesford, and perhaps you have nothing to fear."

" Perhaps !" repeated Rosine, " oh ! we have every thing to fear from such wretches : try, my good fellow, to make your escape from this dreadful place ; I know we are not many miles from the castle ; try to reach it, and send us assistance, before we die of terror here."

The man was going to reply, but he was repelled by the approach of some one, and in a few minutes the woman again entered the room. Hard as she was, she seemed touched by the sight of the desolate females, and she attempted to give them some comfort, but her words were contradicted by her voice and looks, that seemed only calculated to inspire disgust and dismay.

She pressed the spirits on Armida,

and when they were rejected with horror, said calmly, "Poor thing, he was your sweetheart I suppose: well, don't fret, he is in good hands."

"Oh! tell us only," said Rosine in earnest agony, "in what hands we are, or what is it we have to expect; "and Armida, forgetting all her hatred for Wandesford, in the horrible contemplation of his murder, pleaded as earnestly for his life as if her own depended on its preservation; but neither inquiry nor supplication could extort more than cold and coarse assurances that they were in safety and in good hands, that they had nothing to fear, and with a good fire and good whiskey to warm and comfort them, it was their own folly if they fretted for any thing: she then left them, adding she would tell them more to-morrow; and wearied with terror and with conjectures on this mysterious adventure, they at length sunk into mute despair, and with eyes fixed on the dim windows waited

for day, in the prospect of which even the most hopeless feel a kind of indefinite security.

As the men dragged Wandesford from the house, they expressed no intention of immediate violence, but finding he still continued his struggles, they secured his arms with strong ropes, and placing him on a horse between them, they set off at full gallop.

The dreadful state of the weather and the country, and the weakness of their miserable horses, often threatened their lives during their perilous journey, which was pursued at full speed ; and Wandesford, stupified by his struggles, his terrors, and his speed, resigned himself without speaking to his conductors.

At length they arrived at a river, and here Wandesford believed their progress must be checked, but the men seizing his reins, plunged in : their horses swam or rather floundered through the broken ice,

and drenched and chilled, and almost lifeless, they reached the opposite bank.

There was a dim and clouded moon, such as shews itself through the thick vapours of a snowy night, and Wandesford discovered on an eminence the ruins of an edifice that had once been sacred : the numerous narrow spires, the crosses on every pinnacle, and the vast eastern window, were faintly touched by that cold and shadowy light that seems to announce the habitations of the dead.

All round was bare, bleak, and desolate ; but as they then approached, something like a watch-word was given, and echoed from the walls, and some figures were seen moving, and apparently armed, in the shadow of the building, and their forms, covered with snow from head to foot, strangely contrasted the dark and massive walls, and the deep silence that pervaded them.

Wandesford was led forward, and the

men left him in a room, which, when he examined, had some appearance of modern comfort. There were seats and a fire, and from its look it seemed to have been once the cell of the abbot.

He was roused by voices in the next room, into which the men had passed, and he heard them relating with wild exultation the prize they had seized.

He knew too well the cause of their hatred, and he shook with uncontrollable fear.

“What, is Wandesford in your hands !” said a voice whose tones froze his blood : “ how, where, by what means ? ”

The men related that they had found him in a house of theirs, about two miles off, where they believed he had been by accident for shelter, and that he was travelling with his wife and another female.

“ Leave me, leave me for a moment,” said Connal in an agony of emotion : “ I cannot speak to you now ; but,” calling af-

ter them, "touch him not at the peril of your lives: leave him to me alone."

Wandesford was now fully awake to his situation; and he collected the small remains of his mental dignity to meet it. He believed his death certain; and he felt, as most men destitute of religion and principle feel in their last hour, a sense of pride, a false but imposing substitute for both.

In a few moments a number of men entered the room, and silently ranging themselves round it, leaned on their arms with their eyes fixed on the ground.

Connal entered last, and stood amid his desperate band like the great angelic chief among the fallen host of inferior spirits, awed by his strength, dazzled by his brightness, and lost by his example.

Wandesford, rising, proudly stood opposite to him with his arms folded; but he could not lift up his eyes to that figure which still stood proudly eminent above that of all the sons of men.

"Wandesford," said Connal, in a voice which swelled to thunder as he spoke, "let this hour convince you how vain are human distinctions.

"You are a man of rank, and power, and character; I am a rebel, and an out-cast from society; one whose life you might devote to public justice on any spot of England or Ireland but this wild heath alone. Yet you are in my power: a single word from me, and you are swept away from the living world: a breath of this hunted fugitive can scatter your birth and honours like dust before him. You are in my power, and I will make you feel it in every vein of your stubborn heart.

"Look on these men: you know their faces well: look on them and tremble at your crime! They are brave and faithful: they might have been useful and innocent.—What are they now.

"You shudder in dread of the depravity to which you yourself have forced

them. When they saw you first they owned their delusion: they flung those arms from their hands: they threw themselves on the mercy of government, and on your honour.

“Traitor! unworthy of the name of soldier! Cold-blooded, mean, and merciless betrayer! what is the reward of their generous submission, of their naked, unstipulating confidence?”

“They are lost to their families and their children: they are without home and without country: they are hunted to the wilds like brutes: their blood is bought and sold! Yet, guilty as they (and they are guilty), with infamy around them, and death in their view, there is not one of them who cannot, laying his hand on his condemned breast, thank heaven he is not such as you.

“For myself, Wandesford, who twice saved your life, who held my naked breast between you and these men when their just and ominous fears demanded

your life, for me, I will not speak of myself, lest I should forget you are defenceless.

“ I will not pollute my lips, rebel as I am, with your crimes any longer : I hasten to pronounce your sentence, for I am now your judge. Such mercy as you shewed me when I was in your power you may expect from me. You are deceived : I will be most exquisite in my vengeance.

“ Go ! begone ! quit this place in safety and in infamy. The word of the man you have ruined is pledged for your safety : the hands of the men whom you have dipped in blood shall lead you hence.

“ Begone ! and to the last moment of your life remember the vengeance of O'Morven.”

Wandesford, stunned and overwhelmed, scarce heard his last words ; but the men did, and they murmured loudly, and struck their arms with that wild and inarticu-

late expression which supplies, and more than supplies the want of language among a ferocious and mutinous soldiery.

Connal rushed forward.

“Let none of you lay a finger on him. Who is your leader? Not a hair of his head shall fall to the ground!—He is her husband.” He leaned trembling with agony against the wall. “I will cleave to the middle the first of you that touches him!—he is her husband!”

Wandesford saw his agony: he saw the thick drops stand on his quivering forehead: he saw him in vain drag his luxuriant hair over his cheek to hide his distracted features: he feasted on the sight; and neither honour nor gratitude could impel him to the discovery which at that moment he would have even sacrificed his life to conceal.

The murmurs of the party subsided, and they were leading Wandesford away, when Connal, who had recovered himself, exclaimed—

“ Let him remain here to-night : let him have the best accommodation the circumstances he has reduced us to will allow.

“ Colonel Wandesford,” he added more sternly, “ we trust you no more : you must be conducted blindfold from this ruin to-morrow.

“ If we meet you in the field, you will then be at my unshackled mercy : but tell your friends who arm against us that they fight against men, who will gnaw the roots of the earth for sustenance, who will bear this bleak season on their naked bodies, before they will sell those bodies at less than a life for every limb, or yield them to your gibbets while a soldier’s hand remains to give them a soldier’s death.”

The next morning Wandesford was conducted in safety from the ruined abbey ; and forgetting even Armida in his determinations of instant and dreadful vengeance, he set off with the utmost speed for the town where his regiment was quartered.

His proud heart could sooner have submitted to death than to owe his life again to Connal, and he indulged his passions, that they might stifle the reproaches of his conscience, and his trembling recollection of danger.

Armida and Rosine passed the night in speechless solitude.

The morning broke, and though they had longed for its light, they started, for they feared it would only discover new dangers.

About noon the woman entered ; but her manner was now totally changed : she behaved with the utmost servility, and entreated them to take some refreshment, and to quit their dreary apartment as if they were at perfect liberty.

They followed her to a room which had been rendered as comfortable as any room in that dreary mansion could, and exhausted by fatigue, willingly partook of the refreshments which were heaped on the table ; but neither inquiry nor sup-

plication could extort from her a hint that might intimate into whose hands they had fallen, why they were detained, or how they might be liberated.

"You will know all when the captain comes," was the answer; and when entreated to discover who this dreaded man might be, on whom their fate depended, she left them in silence.

Yet often she returned and shewed a solicitude for their accommodation, which they felt must be owing to another. Often too she shewed a wish to communicate more; but then starting at the slightest sound the wind produced in the passages of this desolate building, she hastily quitted them, as if fearful of discovery.

None of the servants who attended them appeared all day, nor could they trace from the windows the slightest prospect of assistance.

The country was covered with snow, on which no trace of human foot was

visible, no vestige of human habitation discernible; and they sat shuddering over their fire during the whole of that dreary day.

Night came on, Rosine, whose terrors were increased by her stronger sense of danger, walked restlessly up and down the room; but Armida, oppressed more by the burden of her heart than her situation, sat passively.

Starting, she called on Rosine to listen to the sound of a harp.

"What harp?" said Rosine; "I hear no harp."

"But I do," said Armida—"I hear the harp of the old bard. Is it an omen of fancy, or a real sound?"

They listened, and then heard it faintly but distinctly in a remote part of the building.

Both eagerly attempted to open the door, but it was secured: they called on the woman, but no one answered; and Armida, returning to her seat, resigned

herself to that delicious but mournful sensation which music excites when it revives the scenes in which we first heard it. Her heart was with Connal on the lone heath again—again she offered him the sacrifice of life, luxury, and fame, but the tear that wandered down her pale cheek was dried by the recollection for whom that sacrifice had been rejected.

At that moment the woman hastily entering, exclaimed—

“The captain is coming.”

She retired before any inquiry could be made or answered, and Armida and Rosine hurried to the window with mingled curiosity and terror.

A severe frost had succeeded the snow of the preceding day: the surface of the ground was hard, dry, and glittering. They heard from a great distance the tramp of horses: the moon was bright, the troop approached, and several persons with lights appearing at the door to receive them, they distinguished a horse-

man of superior figure alighting first, to whom all the rest appeared to pay a kind of rude deference, but he was in a military uniform of green, and all their fears were re-increased, as they beheld his wild, martial figure, his commanding gestures, and the mute and savage submission which the party appeared to pay him.

The loud noise of their entrance echoing through the spacious building drowned every other sound, and Armida and Rosine had no heart to mention their terrors to each other; but before they could speak, the woman rushed in to announce the captain was approaching, and a light and rapid step followed her. They rose at his entrance. There were no lights in the room, and the dim fire did not reveal his figure; but they could distinguish his taking off his cap as he entered, and advancing with graceful dignity.

“Forgive this intrusion,” said he, “it was caused by my wish to remove

your fears: dread nothing from us: we are unhappy men, whose feelings are at war with our situation; but desperate as it is, it cannot compel us to oppress those whom man is bound to protect and honour."

He was interrupted by a groan from Armida, who in the first sound of his voice had recognized the voice of Connal, and vainly attempting to suppress her emotion, sunk from her seat on the ground. Connal rushed forward to assist her: lights had been brought in, and he discovered that the female he was supporting was Armida.

The burst of agony with which he called on her name, the impassioned clasp with which he held her lifeless form one moment to his heart, the despair with which he relinquished her while he still continued to bend over her, amazed Rosine, and she said mentally—

"Is this the lover of Gabriella? Is it repentance or compassion?"

“Rosine,” said Connal, recollecting himself, “are you here too? Forgive me, I did not see you: my eyes are still dim, and aching with the snow.” And as he turned away, his luxuriant hair in vain concealed the tear he wiped away—“I will not insult her by my presence,” said he, mournfully retiring: “tell her I am gone to give orders for her safe conduct. While she remains, she shall be unseen by me, and when she departs, the blessing that follows her steps shall be heard by heaven alone.”

Armida recovered slowly, she looked round, and saw he was gone.

“Why did he go?” said she, faintly: “does Gabriella forbid him the exercises of common humanity? Alas! if he could bear the reproaches of this wasted figure, he had no other to fear.”

Rosine, attempting to console her, mentioned the assurances of safety and liberation she had received from him.

“Yes,” said Armida, “yes, I need

not be told that he can resign me without a sigh, though it will cost me life to resign him. Alas! what a difference does the heart feel between those cold and measured duties that the man of honour pays the helpless female, and that burning tribute—that gift of the free-grace of love, that like that of angels seems intuitive and involuntary.”

An approaching step was heard, and Connal again entered. Armida hastily drew down her veil, as he approached with faltering steps.

“Forgive this second interruption,” said he, in still more faltering accents. “I had forgot what I meant to say: Colonel Wandesford is safe, and at liberty. Your attendants too are here, and to-morrow shall accompany you wherever you wish to go. I need not add,” he continued, while his dark cheek was tinged with crimson, “that even in this den of rapine all that belongs to you has been as sacred as in a sanctuary. My

own faithful men shall to-morrow attend you within a mile of the castle, or where you wish, at the risk of their lives."

"And is Wandesford safe?" cried Rosine, to whom the frightful image of his murder was still present; and even Armida uttered an expression of pleasure, for she felt that she was not deserted while Wandesford lived, and this gave her a degree of confidence that her forlorn situation seemed to demand.

The awful frown that was sometimes seen on Connal's brow gathered as he looked at her; his voice suddenly became firm, and he said:

"The honour due to the sex and rank of the wife of a general officer shall be paid strictly by the man who avows himself his mortal enemy, and who will never forget it, except when he has him in his power."

"His wife! did he say his wife!" cried Armida, starting from her seat as he proudly retired; "but what matters

it," she added, resuming her seat with dignity, "what matters it to the lover of Gabriella whether I am the wife of Wandesford or not?"

The woman now returned, and from the increased servility of her manner they easily comprehended that they were indebted to Connal for the change it had undergone.

Profuse and even elegant refreshments were spread before a cheerful fire, but Armida could not partake of them; and Rosine, who shuddered to think the purchase of them might have been some brave man's life, declined them too. The woman retired, after inquiring at what hour they wished to depart in the morning. Armida, after some ineffectual attempts to speak, motioned to Rosine to answer, and she, who felt from this appeal they could not quit this spot too soon, naming an early hour, the woman retired.

The presence of Connal seemed to act

on every inmate of this rude mansion: no loud voices, no hurried steps, no mutter of conspiracy, or burst of riot, announced the haunt of banditti; yet Armida and Rosine felt terror even in this strange calm, till weariness overpowering every other sensation, they threw themselves in their clothes on the humble bed, as the hoarse clock below striking one, was answered by the jarring sounds of bolts and locks strongly secured, and the solitary step of some individual, who appeared to be stationed as a sentinel in the hall.

END OF VOL. II.

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THE MILESIAN.

CHAP. I.

Go then, thou setting star ; take from these eyes,
These eyes, that, if they see thee, will be wishing :
Oh ! take those languishing, pale fires away,
And leave me to the wide, dark den of death.

LEE.

ARMIDA could not sleep : a feverish
doze was every moment broken by a
dream of terror ; and once she was so
strongly impressed with the idea of some
one being in the room, that she sprung
from the bed, and seating herself beside
the fire, tried to banish the phantoms that

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still seemed gathering in the darker recesses of the room.

These visions soon faded away, but she could not dismiss the idea that some one was near the room, for from time to time a distinct and measured foot-fall seemed to cross the passage which led to the apartment. This circumstance, though little surprising in a house inhabited by armed men, surrounded by danger, yet aggravated by night, fear, and solitude, wrought upon her feelings so powerfully, that at length forcing herself to the door, she threw it open, and cast a terrified glance beyond it.

A figure stood at the extremity of the passage, which retired at her approach. Her dim eyes did not at first discover Connal, but when she did, shrinking back, she faintly exclaimed, "Ah! why are you here?"

"I dreaded," said Connal, turning from her, "I dreaded that in this wild

abode something might disturb your rest; and I have watched here that neither sound or step might approach your room."

"I have no fears," said Armida; "you may retire, if that was your purpose."

"Oh, no! it was not: it was for a last look—a last sound—a last thought of you. I stood here that I might say to my heart, I have been near her for the last time. I wish that I could wither on this spot, thinking my last thought of you. And sure the happy Wandesford would not deny me this: Oh, no! If he could witness this bitter moment, he would triumph; triumph not less that you were his, than that you are lost to me."

"I am not the wife of Wandesford," said Armida, collecting all her strength to utter these words; "but I forget I am speaking to the lover of Gabriella."

"You are not the wife of Wandes-

ford!" cried Connal, rushing to her feet, and grasping her hand, which in spite of her struggles he pressed to his lips and bosom; but the next moment he released it, and bowing his burning forehead almost to the ground, he exclaimed, "but to-morrow you will be his: you are going to meet him, and I must conduct you."

"Where, where is Gabriella," said Armida, indignantly repelling him, "where is she, to witness this scene?"

"Gabriella!" repeated Connal, in amazement; "go to her, go to her; like me she may be deceived; but she will not like me be broken-hearted. She was not deceived. What delusion is this: she is in safety, restored to her home, under the protection of her family."

"Did you forsake her so soon then," said Armida, with indignant anguish, "so young, so beautiful, so devoted. Alas! what had I to expect."

Connal's burning cheek was visible

even in the shade. "Do not force me," he said, with a generous blush, "to expose the weakness of a woman: her passion, her infatuation, call it what you will, led her to follow me. I restored her uncompelled; I led her home; I left her under her own roof, with a heart touched by gratitude, but incapable of love."

Armida stood for some moments silent and stunned; at last desperately breaking from him, "Why was I told this!" she cried, "I was less wretched when I believed you false."

"Believed me false! Alas! was it necessary to believe me false to make you renounce me? I thought you had only confirmed the sentence of the world; that you had deserted one who was already deserted by all mankind. I thought you had awoke from the blessed dream we once dreamed together, and given your hand to the object who offered you the luxuries of life and fortune."

"Did you think thus of me?" said Ar-

mida, with mournful triumph, "then I have more to forgive than you, Connal. I would have followed you to this wild and lawless spot, to the deserts of America: what do I say! I was following you through darkness and danger; in the hour of terror and infamy I was following you, alone, and at midnight, without guide and without hope. But I heard you had another companion: I met you with her on the heath, and, in despair, I gave myself to Wandesford."

"And yet you loved me, Armida?" cried Connal, grasping her hands, and fixing on her his eyes, that burned with love and despair.

"Alas! had I not loved you more than life, I had never given myself to Wandesford: it was only when I ceased to value life that I consented to become his."

"Yet still you loved me, Armida?" repeated Connal. Armida reclined her drooping head on his shoulder. "I am

no longer the outcast of society—I am no longer a rebel,” he cried, clasping her to his throbbing heart. “I am the proudest, the first of men. Armida loved me in my hour of ruin. Oh! tremble not, my love! the world sees us not. I may cast these hopeless arms around you—I may hold you to this condemned heart: the world will not know that the first of her sex, in this dark hour, wept in the arms of a ruined man.”

Locked in his arms, Armida wished for death: “Let us part, and die,” she said, and broke from his arms; “destiny has forbid us happiness, and life does not at least deny us dignity: let us part like those who have deserved a better fate.”

“And must those who loved as we did part as we have parted? How often have we separated in tears! and shall not our last parting be kinder? How often have I held you to a heart of agony! and shall I not once clasp you to it in

passion? Armida, cast one last, dying gleam on my dark fate, that I may remember its light when the night has gathered round me; that I may say to myself, when I lie on the earth, that must be my bed and grave—I touched her hand, and feel it still: I heard her voice, and its sound is with me now.”

Blinded with her tears, Armida tried to reach the door, and faintly repelling him with her hand, she said, “I need no parting struggle—no last agony to finish the breaking of my heart;” and as she spoke, believing her dying hour not distant, and not wishing him to witness its horrors, she closed the door, and sunk on the ground.

Terrified as well as wounded by this movement, Connal supplicated, he demanded, he even attempted to force admittance. Armida heard his impetuous intreaties: she heard him plead with that energy of passion, whose fierceness and fondness at once melt and alarm: she

trembled at her situation : but when he said, indignantly, “ Do you fear me, Armida ? ” and she heard the slight door shake at his touch.

She rose, and collecting all her strength, threw it open,—“ No, I do not fear you ; but I love you ! I am in your power : now enter, if you dare.”

Connal, awed as with the presence of an angel, sunk on his knees : he did not speak : with silent devotion he embraced the walls : he kissed the ground which her steps had touched : he deluged with tears the spot on which she had wept. “ Farewel ! ” he uttered, with that sound which strikes like a knell on the heart that has loved.

“ Farewel ! ” echoed Armida, with a passion that proved her fears forgot.

“ Farewel ! ” they both said, extending their arms as if to seek other’s forms through the darkness with which their eyes struggled in vain. “ Farewel for ever ! ”

Armida, as long as she heard his retreating steps, stood ; and when they ceased, she tottered to a seat, and remained there frozen and senseless, her hands locked in each other, her eyes fixed, though unconsciously, on the spot where she had seen him go, till an indistinct noise forced her to perception, though not to recollection of either place or person—it was the servant and Rosine, who were preparing for their departure : she looked on them, but without distinguishing any thing. They placed her in the carriage, and it proceeded rapidly, but she did not utter a word, or even imagine where they were conveying her.

The rapid motion, the tumult of the servants, and the chill air, restored her to recollection ; she gazed round her, but the sight of her own servants accompanying the carriage at once made her feel she was returning to the castle, and shuddering, she relapsed again into silence.

The carriage was attended by a band of Connal's troops, but from the state of the country they were unable to take the direct road; and though the castle was not twenty miles distant, the winding route they pursued, and the state of the roads, rendered it impossible for them to reach it that evening. Their journey often led them over precipices, where the spirited horses could hardly be held with a man at the head of each. The inclemency of the weather increased, and the heavy snow-showers, at times, hid from them the dangers they encountered, and at times shut them out from the view of all assistance. At length, as they ascended a steep hill, from which the wind, raging with unresisting fury, swept the snow as fast as it fell, the terrified and panting horses fell back; and the driver, half blind with the storm, and ignorant of the road, losing all command of them, the carriage rolled backward to the very edge. Rosine shrieked with ter-

ror, but Armida did not utter a word. "On such a spot," she thought, "he once saved my life : but is it worth preserving now !" The troop galloped forward ; but Connal, though he had kept in the rear all day, was now the foremost, and while the rest only terrified the horses by the tumult they made, he checked the progress of their danger, by applying his shoulder to the wheel ; nor did he quit it, though lacerated to the bone, till the animals became steady.

He then hurried round, and throwing open the door of the carriage, implored them to alight while the horses were led down the hill, whose precipitantness defied the skill of the driver. Rosine eagerly quitted the carriage ; but Armida, trembling at his sight, though undismayed by her danger, averted her head, and remained in her seat. Connal, forgetting all constraint, supplicated her in agony to quit it : she continued inflexibly silent, and to Rosine's serious intreaties

she faintly answered, "I feel no danger while I remain here." Connal then carried Rosine in his arms down the hill, while his men, almost at the hazard of their lives, led the carriage down the precipice. Then, when he was at a distance, Armida leaned forward for a moment, and her imagination, always exalted by his presence, felt a kind of melancholy pleasure even in her present danger.

The wild attitudes of the band, their courage, and that hardihood that seems peculiar to the natives of a gloomy climate, and far below, the noble figure of Connal struggling with the storm, half lost in it, yet seeming almost to command it; his mantle floating on the blast, the plumes of his military helmet rent, and scattering on it like colours in a battle. But when she saw, as her danger increased, his firm step faltering on the cliff, his look so often thrown back, his loud and eager charges to the men,

lost in the blast that pealed like thunder on the hill, yet retaining all the feeling that inspired them; and at length his resigning Rosine the moment she was safe, and flying to her side, while his wounded arm tracked every step on the snow with blood, she lost all self-command; and as he approached, and she saw his lacerated arm, which he had not even bound, for the first time she screamed aloud with terror. Connal, who believed that this emotion of fear was caused by his presence, not his wound, which he had hardly felt, gave her a look of despair, and throwing himself on his horse disappeared in a moment.

But his parting look, his parting figure, as he proudly raised his head, and, drawing up the reins, urged his noble horse to its full speed, though on the edge of a precipice, as if he meant to bound into the air, and contend in his passion with the angry elements, revived past recollections in Armida's heart, and

she attempted to tell him the real cause of her terror; but her voice could no longer reach him—he was gone.

“What avails it?” said she, borrowing false resolution from his absence. “If we must part, let there be no more of these struggles, that take away all dignity from my heart, without diminishing its despair.”

Rosine then re-entered the carriage, and under her impressions of recent danger, she could not help asking Armida how she could venture down that dreadful descent in a carriage.

“What had I to risk?” said Armida, desperately; “what have I to fear on earth but one object? Do you know that the sensation of his being near me, the bare imagination that I may see him again, almost deprives me of reason? Let me not waste the remains of strength he has left me: let me not be unworthy of this hero in my last hours.”

Rosine wept at these words, but she

reverenced the kind of frantic dignity with which they were uttered, and she wept in silence.

At the close of the day the storm subsided; and the sun, breaking for a moment through the heavy snow-clouds, shed its full glory on the ruined abbey, which appeared on the summit of a hill they were approaching. The flakes of snow, falling thinner and thinner, appeared to kindle in the rays that shone through them; and the great east window, in a blaze with the setting light, seemed the portal to a fairy palace of fire. But all was dark before they arrived; and they were lifted out of the carriage, chilled, and half dead with fatigue and cold.

As the servants supported them through the great aisle, a mortal coldness seized on the heart of Armida; and the terrified looks of her servants, who believed they had been brought to this dreary place for the most fatal purpose,

and who, as they tottered along, expected death from behind every massive pillar, deprived them even of the power of asking the extent of their terrors.

The dark gothic chamber into which they were conducted, its stillness, its solitude, and the dim blue lights that scarcely burned in it, made them appear to each other like spirits meeting in a vault. There were but two habitable rooms in this ancient structure; one was prepared for Armida and Rosine, the other was given up to their attendants. Connal and his band passed the night under the cloister, exposed to the inclemency of the elements, to defend the repose of those who suspected them of murder. Connal, determined they should not even have an opportunity of communicating disaffection to Armida's servants, kept them without any other shelter than the cloister the whole night, and that they might have no room for murmuring, he had no other himself.

As long as Armida had a sensation that he was near, she was not without a hope (which she dared not confess to herself) that some remote contingency, something improbable, or even preternatural, might prevent their final separation; and this hope, which we find such difficulty in avowing, or even analyzing to ourselves, is yet that of all others which we find it the most difficult to resign. Since her refusal to quit the carriage, Connal had not approached her, nor had he once appeared since her arrival. All was still as the moments that precede death. She felt that the last hour was arrived, and the strength that feebly and fitfully had supported her till then now utterly failed: she sunk on the ground, and repeatedly exclaiming—"It is the last! it is the last hour!" seemed insensible of every thing but the image these words conveyed.

Rosine in vain exhausted every topic of fortitude or consolation; with hope

all fortitude had fled, and she listened like one who had no longer any excuse for not yielding to despair.

They had not been long together, when one of their servants entering, mentioned that they were to leave the abbey in the morning, and that he had been furnished with a protection by the captain, in the event of their meeting with any of the rebels, which was scarcely probable at so short a distance from the castle. The man could not contain his joy at the idea of being in safety once more; but he mixed it with loud eulogiums on the mild and generous treatment they had received from O'Morven.

"It is well," said Rosine, who felt the sufferings of Armida at these words. "It is well: leave us: we shall be ready in the morning."

The man then went away, after congratulating his lady on the prospect of being soon at Montclare Castle in safety,

and in the company of Wandesford. Armida faintly bowed her head ; but from the moment of this ill-timed visit her agitation terribly encreased.

She attempted to listen to the words of comfort uttered by Rosine, but she could not understand them. She tried to collect her ideas, but the effort made their derangement only plainer to herself : she endeavoured to converse, but she could not utter a coherent sentence. At length, snatching up a pencil, she began writing with rapidity ; but her trembling hands, and her fixed and burning eyes, seemed to announce her almost unconscious of what she was doing. With difficulty she traced the following lines :—

“ The parting hour is come, that hour which the hearts of those who love have tried to represent by the image of death. There is a great difference, though I have no longer strength to describe it. Death presents an image of repose, but

I have years of existence still before me—
a dreadful existence, without motion,
and without feeling.

“The parting hour is come! I would
if possible tell the world what I have suf-
fered; I would make it tremble at what
I feel. Oh! that I could pour on this
paper some of the thoughts of fire that
are consuming my heart! I have read
much, I have thought much; but I have
not at this moment a single word to ex-
press the last agony!— I try to write,
but I cannot put together one distinct
sentence. I try to speak, but I utter
only frightful and inarticulate cries.—
Even Rosine does not understand me.
Despair like mine terrifies even friend-
ship away.

“I feel as if I had never loved him
till this moment.

“Alas! it is impossible to die of grief:
how often have I had lately a tightness of
breath, a fever of heart, that seemed to
promise me swift relief: but youth and

nature are against me: I am not yet twenty-three years old: how much of the desert of life yet remains to be trod, and alone.

“Rosine, firm and tender friend, you never spared my errors, you never flattered my passions, but you never condemned my heart: you will meet him again in life, when I am in my grave. Oh! tell him not that my mind was destroyed; that my heart was broken; tell him that I smiled—but he will not believe you.

“A rebel! a rebel! Alas! the laws will not distinguish between crimes and characters: they will not pause to say, in this man we condemn the first of human beings: and at a distance I shall live: I shall hear of his danger; I shall hear of his death: I shall die at a distance from him.

“I think if I was held to his heart once more; if I saw his eyes fixed on me for the last time; if I heard him ut-

ter what is at the bottom of my heart, but what I can never express, the bitterness of that moment would be such that I must be shortly out of pain.

“ My despair does at last drive me to think of death : alas ! is it come to this. I was called young, beautiful, and eminent ; and must I end my course by self-murder ? Connal ! Connal ! you who have made me what I am, take the wretched forfeit of the life which you have stripped even of hope : is it not better that I should die by your hands than my own ! ” * * * *

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She attempted to add some words to these, but her eyes seemed to burn in their sockets like coals of fire ; and the characters on the paper seemed illuminated with burning sulphur. She closed her eyes, and pressed her forehead tightly with both her hands, but still she saw the walls of the room, the hills she had crossed that day, and the wild counte-

nances of the rebels, swimming before her in floods of fire.

"Where is the snow?" said she in delirium. "There was snow there when I saw them last: bring it again, to quench these flames."

When she uttered these words, recollecting herself, and shocked at the derangement they betrayed, she tried to rise, and reach the casement for air. Rosine with difficulty supported her to it, and threw it open. It was midnight: a bright full moon shed a solemn glory on the night. Heaven, burning with ten thousand stars, seemed the dark concave of a mine of diamonds: every thing grand, motionless, and lovely, seemed to contrast that fever of despair that was consuming the wretched Armida. She turned her eyes to the earth to find something congenial to misery there. Below the casement there was a large enclosure: it was the cemetery of the abbey. They could distinguish the dark tomb-stones

among the snow, the crosses that marked the graves of the order, and the leafless branches under whose shade the owners had mused on the view of their final habitation.

The sight struck Armida to the heart. "Every thing," said she, "speaks the same lesson to me. This is no casual omen. Nature and passion alike announce my death. These all died in peace," said she, solemnly waving her arms over the dead: "they had sufferings, for they were mortal; but they reposed them and their hopes in the bosom that never rejected one, or betrayed the other—the bosom of Deity. Oh, how different is the fate of the votaries of this world and of the next! How wretched did they appear in the eyes of men: their food coarse, their bed the ground, their employment prayer. Who would outwardly have compared their lot with mine? Yet their life was peaceful, and their end blessed. I lived only

to the world, and with a happier fate I might have embellished it; and the world has left me to die of a broken heart."

Awful as these reflections were, they seemed to calm her: she was no longer convulsed: she no longer trembled: she leaned on Rosine, silent and absorbed.

Starting at a sound near them, they turned and saw Connal. He was traversing the room unconscious there was any one there. Armida shrunk at his sight; and Rosine, terrified at its consequences, said, "Why are you here?"

"I knew not where I was," said Connal, starting as from a trance. "Since I saw her for the last time, I know not where I am, or what I do: I wander about like a condemned spirit—I believed, I thought something pressed on my mind about your departure, but it is gone, and I cannot recall it."

Rosine, now unable to speak, implored him by signs to leave the room. He

retired; but in a few minutes he returned again, and coming no further than the door, threw himself against it, gazing on Armida.

He did not speak—his heart-broken look left no room for words.

“Ah!” said Rosine, “why is this? Have you no mercy?”

“Despair has left me none. I cannot give what I have never been shewn,” said Connal, in a voice hollow and broken with agony. “I call Heaven, and I call my worst foe to witness, I have borne all trials of fortune like a man, but this requires more than man can be or bear.

“I will indulge human feelings; it cannot make me more wretched: while she is here I will be here. Armida, will you banish me? Will you deny me your sight the last hour I ever can behold you?”

Armida sunk from Rosine's arms to

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the ground. "You will kill her," cried Rosine, kneeling on the ground beside her.

"Were we to perish in each other's arms," said Connal, rushing to her, "at this moment, I would clasp her thus. Armida, my love! Heaven denies us every thing but this luxury of despair, and we will enjoy it, even to madness enjoy: we will make the happy tremble. Oh, how wretches revel!—You cannot speak, my love! but this silence is sweeter than all the eloquence you once possessed; and those pale lips, those closed eyes, that form that seems to fade at my touch, oh, they are dearer to me than all the pride of beauty in which I first beheld you: thus pale, cold, dying, come to this desolate heart: it is not too much to ask, to behold you as you are now."

Armida faintly repelled him, and fixing on him a look of death, "If you can speak," said she, gasping, "a word of

iron, a word that will destroy us both, speak it, and let us die together."

"We will not die together!" said Connal, mournfully. He bore her in his arms to the casement, and pointed to the distant hills: "There is the grave of your love, he will not die a felon's death: on those lone hills will be my grave: one brave man will stand by me—one brave man will survive me long enough to dig with his sword the earth that is to cover me, perhaps to moisten it with a tear, before he falls beside me: but you, you will live in luxury and fame: yet spare one tear to him whose dying thought will be on you, or give it now."

"Oh, God!" cried the wretched Armida, "that even Gabriella was with you! Alas! you will want a woman's breast to lean on, a woman's heart to feel for you at that hour."

At that moment a sound which struck on the hearts of both was heard from

below. The old bard, who had accompanied O'Morven, and who remembered that the remains of some of the family were deposited in the burial-ground, had wandered out to feel for the graves where they lay. Armida saw him totter over the ground: she saw him sink on a grave; and she heard again those ominous chords he struck the night she met him on the heath. How different from the brilliant tones which awoke her early sensibility, and inspired her youthful talent!

"Ah!" said she, shrinking at the sound, "my former friends are all turned against me. Music, that I once cultivated; music, that I once was said to embellish; music is now become the summoner of death to me!" As she spoke, her cold hands lost their hold of Connal, and her eyes became fixed. The distracted Connal, kneeling before her, implored for a word, a look of life.

"I can no longer see you," said Ar-

mida, sinking from his arms to the ground ; “ and though I stretch out my hands, they wander about, without being able to reach you.”

“ God ! this is too much for man. Armida ! answer !—Will you be mine ? I speak in despair ; I have nothing to offer or to promise : will you be the companion of a rebel, in a desert, amid war, and want, and danger ?”

Armida, with an impulse like fate, threw herself into his arms. He clasped her to his heart.

CHAP. II.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
Said then the lost Arch-angel.

MILTON.

A DREADFUL calm succeeded this storm of passion. Armida, exhausted by emotion, did not quit her couch: her servants were dismissed. Connal's band retired, and he himself, absent all day, only appeared in the evening, in a state that shewed he almost hazarded life to behold her for a moment, and to depart.

Rosine, unable to desert Armida in this moment of desolation, passed her sad time in traversing the cloisters of the abbey, or listening to the blast that swept through them at night.

On the tenth evening, as she sat revolving the danger of their retreat, being

discovered by Lady Montclare, and scarce knowing whether to wish or to fear it, she beheld the man who had been left in the abbey, as an attendant, under the casement: he beckoned to her, and she leaned forward. "There is no light on the Galway hills," said he, "nor no light from the old tower on the lough; nor all along the bog, I see no light; and you must set off to-night."

"What do you mean?" said Rosine, "and where are we to go?"

"The captain told me," said the man, "that if his party were near, they would light fires on the hills; but if not, there was no safety for you; and you must go with all speed to the camp, for the king's troops would come and take you else."

Rosine, though terrified at the thought of seeking shelter in a rebel camp, could not yet forsake Armida, and she hastened to apprise her of the necessity of their

immediate departure. She had been almost insensible that day, but the terror of falling into the hands of Wandesford seemed to operate like an electric shock on her frame: she rose, and though her limbs could scarce support her, was, in a few minutes, ready to be gone. There was no time to be lost, and, with the man for their conductor, they sat off before day-light for the camp. They travelled in silence for some hours, and as the pale light of a winter's morning broke on the mountain road they were ascending the horses suddenly became restive, and plunged with so much violence, that Rosine, though now almost insensible of inferior dangers, inquired what was the matter. "The horses are frightened," said the man.

"And what is it that frightens them?" said Rosine.

"There was a man hung in chains for murder in the last rebellion," said

the man, "and his skeleton is swinging on the gibbet, in every blast of wind; and I can't get the horses past it."

The seat shook with Armida's convulsive shudder; and Rosine forbore all further inquiries.

The horses at length became manageable, and, as the day-light broke, they saw around them a scene of wildness and desolation, such as seemed an apt introduction to the retreat of an outlawed chief. The track led through a narrow glen, broken by masses of stone, grey with moss, through which a red, swollen, wintry stream struggled for a passage. Mountains, half lost in mist, bounded the view on every side: a few ruinous huts appeared on their crags, which resounded with the scream of birds, the heralds of solitude and famine; and the heath and the fern waved in that rank and dreary luxuriance that proclaims cultivation forgot, and life extinct.

The track, at length winding round one of the stony hills that broke the glen, disclosed a wide moor, on the side of a mountain, impracticable in the winter from the morass by which it was surrounded.

It was covered to the summit with huts of clay, indistinguishable in their colour from the brown soil on which they stood. The crowds, with wild attitudes, and hurried motions, the arms scattered in confusion every where, and an indistinct kind of military tumult, informed them they were arrived at the rebel camp; and dreary as their late solitude appeared, they could at that moment have shrunk back to it with delight.

The carriage entered the camp, and Connal did not appear. As they advanced, respect seemed to overcome curiosity: the men stood apart, and the women retired into the huts, holding back their children from gazing on the travellers. The camp consisted of a number of huts,

built of sods and clay, covered with moss, and strengthened with stones which were gathered on the mountain. From these rude abodes the rage of winter had often driven them into the caverns at its base; and several holes in the ground, from which smoke was rising, shewed a number of these subterraneous retreats were inhabited still.

Half way up the mountain stood a dismantled stone building, which appeared to have been a hunting lodge: here they stopt, and a woman appeared to receive them. Armida looked fearfully around for Connal, but she did not dare to mention his name. "Where is your captain?" said Rosine, at length.

"He has been absent these four days," said the woman, "on an expedition, to intercept some artillery."

Rosine eagerly interrupted her to inquire when he was expected.

"There has been no express since he went," said the woman, "and we hear

so many reports that we never believe any thing till we see him alive: but if he arrives to-day, he must ride forty miles since this morning, for he is in the neighbourhood of Gort by this time: but we were ordered to prepare for your reception," she continued, "and I hope there has been nothing in it to displease you."

"No, nothing!" said Armida, waving her hand for the woman to retire.

"Ah! my lady," said the woman, looking at her with compassion, "if you are so cast down at first, what will become of you, or how will you bear what you must see in this place?"

She then went away, and Armida, who felt sick at heart, placed herself at the window for air; but she was soon compelled to withdraw, for the camp was already filled with the report of an high born beauty, of English birth, and immense wealth, having followed the fortunes of their leader, and such numbers

assembled, by stealth, to gaze on her, that the sentinels were compelled to disperse them.

No one but their female attendant approached them during the day ; but this solitude only gave Armida leisure to feel her situation more intensely, and neither the superiority of her mind, nor the energy of her passion, were proof against its terrors, now that the trial had arrived. From the scenes of her early life to those she was now plunged in, the transition was too abrupt, the contrast too shocking : she could not speak, and Rosine dared not : they sat silent, each wishing for the presence of Connal ; Armida, because she felt it a vindication, and Rosine, because she knew it a protection.

It was evening, when the echoes of the mountain rung with a horn, and at a distance they discovered a horseman on the heath, advancing at full gallop : his

band, far behind him, in vain urged their wearied horses to keep up with him. The blasts of the horn redoubled, and the camp was all tumult and exultation at the return of their leader and his party.

Waiting neither for praise nor congratulation, he left his band to tell their tale, and flinging himself from his horse, which fell at the door when he alighted, was in Armida's presence in a moment. She tried to rise, but her limbs failed her, and extending her arms to him, she sunk again on the seat. Connal, who was rushing forward, paused ; but his figure in this attitude of suspended emotion, the glow of anguish and fondness that suffused his features, and the flash of agony that darted from his eyes as he gazed on her, awoke all the energy of her feeling, and amid weakness and terror she tried to greet him with one of those smiles that was the offspring of happier hours. This smile tore every nerve of

Connal's heart, and rushing to her feet, and hiding his face, "Is it thus!" he exclaimed, "is it thus I behold you!"

"I have been ill," said Armida, bending over him, "but it was only in your absence: I am well already, since I have seen you."

Connal, mournfully raising his head, and gazing on her through eyes dim with grief and love, tried to answer the smile that gleamed from her faded features, but his own were convulsed with the effort, and he turned to Rosine for relief.

"And you are here, my inestimable friend!" he cried, kissing the hand she offered to him.

"Yes," said Rosine, "I have restored her to you, and now I resign my charge: Oh, Connal! be worthy of its inestimable value."

"I am not! I cannot be!" said Connal, tortured with the various emotions of his proud and passionate heart: "I feel I am no longer a man of honour, or

a lover : I am a selfish, desperate wretch ; and, like the first apostate, I have drawn down an angel in my fall."

Trembling at his agitation, Armida attempted to sooth him, and her effort, though almost inarticulate, succeeded. Alarmed by the faintness of her tones, he repressed his emotion, and kneeling at her feet, he gazed at her silently. It was then when she looked at him and saw his dark cheek, his matted hair, and his features, from which the glow of meeting had fled, and left them dewed with toil, and racked with care, she reproached herself for the fatigue and danger to which she had exposed him.

" Ah !" said she, " what fatigue you must have undergone for this meeting ! what a distance you have traversed since the morning ! I saw your horse fall the moment you alighted from him."

" It was the first moment I had done so for eight-and-forty hours. The short sleep I snatched was on the saddle ; and

one hand was on the bridle while I fed myself with the other."

"And will you not take some rest—some refreshment now?" said Armida, tenderly.

"Yes, thus, for ever if I could," replied Connal, extending himself at her feet, and pressing her hand to his beating bosom. At that moment the horn sounded, and Connal, starting from the ground, hurried on his military cloak.

"It is the horn for the evening watch," he cried.

"And will you go without a moment's repose?" said Armida.

"I hardly know the meaning of the word," said Connal, with a stern smile of military pride.

"Ah! you are bleeding too," cried Armida, almost shrieking as his parting hair shewed a recent scar.

"A trifle—a scratch I received from the sabre of one of those Hessians we met this morning—the speed with which

I rode has made it bleed again ; I did not feel it till this moment."

" Will you not stay to have it dressed at least ?" said Armida.

" I must first inquire if my men have taken care of theirs ; if they have, I shall not feel mine." He turned, and gazing on her with agonizing tenderness, added, " Yes, I shall feel for ever that precious tear that has healed and embalmed it."

The guard was now assembled, the sentinels changed, but from respect to Armida, they were removed to a distance from her habitation ; one only, spreading his cloak on the heath, lay down beneath her window ; it was Connal, exhausted as he was by toil and danger : her presence, and the thoughts it suggested, prevented him from closing his eyes.

The fugitives were as little disposed to rest, nor for some time after they were left to themselves had either courage to speak. At length Armida, with an effort almost convulsive, said :

"I need not ask what you think, Rosine; your looks have already condemned me; yet fear not to speak to me—tell me all you think and feel for me. Ah! how long will it be before I again shall hear the voice of a friend?"

"My dear Armida, I do not condemn, I do not even presume to advise; my faculties are only equal to common emergencies: for the terrible conflicts I have witnessed, I have neither counsel nor experience; perhaps you have done best in following the dictates of your own heart: yet let me implore you, trust it no longer with your present situation, but avail yourself of the first legal opportunity to become the wife of Connal. I know my importunity will be aided by his."

The deep crimson that flushed Armida's pallid cheek, her hurry to avert it, and her ineffectual attempts to answer this appeal, proved how deeply she felt it.

Rosine then approaching her, added with solemn tenderness :

“ As I must now leave you, my dear Armida, as I have remained with you till it is no longer possible or safe for me to remain, let my last words sink into your heart. Connal is devoted to you : that he has been criminal may perhaps be the result of accident ; whether he will be so depends on you : employ, I conjure you, every power his passion gives you to withdraw him from this guilty and fatal association ; urge him to supplicate the mercy of Government for himself and his deluded followers, and I may yet see you restored to felicity and honour.”

The total desolation of her situation struck like death on the heart of Armida, but neither her pride nor her affection would permit her to supplicate Rosine for another moment's delay, and she hastened to speak of Connal, that she might not betray her emotion.

“ Ah ! ” said she, “ it was only with the hope you suggest that I followed him to these extremities, but since I have arrived, it has almost abandoned me ; even in the hour when he first beheld me, when I had not yet lost all my original brightness, his mind was fixed upon this fearful purpose. What have I to expect now ? my mind and figure are alike impaired. Art and nature have both deserted me ; and such is the diffidence with which misfortune and his superior mind have inspired me, that in his presence I often feel at a loss for the most common expressions. I am a true woman—the man whom I love awes me, and my former confidence in my powers is gone.”

“ And to whom have those powers been sacrificed ? ” said Rosine, with energy. “ But for him you would still have been triumphing in their consciousness : by that very plea, the strongest that can be urged with a man who has a

heart, plead with him, and you must prevail : assail him with your weakness, and you will be resistless. He only requires a voice to warn, a tear to melt him. I would stake my life his present defalcation is neither that of feeling or of principle. He has been seduced by art, or ensnared by treachery, or impelled by violence."

"He has indeed," said Connal, suddenly appearing before them. "Forgive me, my love, for this abruptness : the guard are now absent on a patrole, and when they return I must not be seen near this sacred retreat : this is the only moment I can seize to vindicate my conduct. I have indeed, Rosine, been "a man more sinned against than sinning."

He paused to arrange his thoughts, and then finding the effort vain, said abruptly :—

"Imagine all that pride, solitude, and enthusiasm, can make of a young romantic mind, and you have imagined mine.

“ You know my grandfather took me while an infant from my wretched parents; their want made them willing to resign me. I do not accuse them, for they knew nothing of his purpose, of which I have been since the victim. ✓

“ I was too young to understand my grandfather's character then. Implacable from pride, fierce from want, and intoxicated by solitary grandeur, and the loyal homage of his remaining followers, he shut himself up in the old tower on his ancient demesne, and listened to the tales of his bards and the songs of his harpers, who told him he was the sovereign of the western isles.

“ He listened to them, and brooded over his pride and his misfortunes till madness began to ferment in his mind; and he conceived the frantic idea of wresting Ireland from the English hand. When I was brought to the tower, I was too young to perceive the clouds of frenzy that were gathering over his

mind ; but the flashes of genius and courage that broke through them in his brighter hours awed and delighted me.

* "The life I led was rapidly lifting my mind to the wild, cloudy, preternatural level of his. My hours were passed in climbing precipices, in wandering on heaths, in watching the gathering storm, in listening to the roar of the ocean in its strength.

"I was the child of mist and storm, of wandering and loneliness, of pride and melancholy.

X "At night, seated in the hall at my grandfather's feet, I listened to the harp and the legend till I believed them true as inspiration, and my heart burned and beat for the time "ere the emerald gem of the western world was set in the crown of a stranger."

"I became devoted to my grandfather with a love 'passing that of woman,' with a mingled feeling of anguish, pity, and veneration, that tortured, while it

exalted the heart. He seemed to me the first of men; there was no comparison between him and any other of his species. My whole range of existence included only him and his vassals; and what a difference was there between them: he seemed to me like the corse of some departed power; his followers like the slaves who watch with melancholy homage round his tomb; and I felt as if I had the talisman whose charm might bid that mighty dust awake and live.

“ Had that man bid me turn my sword against my own life I would have done it: he required me to turn it against my country, and I obeyed. You tremble, my love; ah! you must steel your nerves, Armida, if you would listen to my tale.

“ I was a young Hannibal, sworn to enmity on the altar of my country. My devotion to this object became as frantic and hopeless as my grandfather's. But, oh, God! what struggles, what convul-

✓ sions of mind awaited me, when the progress of years and of knowledge dispelled the illusion that possessed me.

X “ I found, when my brain cooled, that it was impossible for Ireland to subsist as an independent country ; impossible for her to exist without dependance on the continental powers, or a connexion with England.

“ In the first goadings of conviction, I would have blessed the man, who, by one friendly blow, had ended the contest within me.

“ I thought on the desperation of the enterprise ; I determined to renounce it ; I thought of the ties that bound me to the brave men who had embraced it, and I determined to stand by them to the last.

X “ I knew I was leading them like sheep to the slaughter, yet I had now led them so far, that none could bring them back, and it seemed worse to desert than even to sacrifice them. I reproached

myself for temerity ; I accused myself of cowardice ; till worn by struggling in the toils of conscience and purpose, I sat gloomily down, and resolved to lead them where none would survive to reproach me, or I should not survive to hear them.

“ It was in this hour of desolation I beheld you, Armida : even at this moment how my heart overflows with passion and joy when I think of that hour, in which the world seemed new-born again to me, in which a hope of life I was almost indignant at stole into my heart.

“ I gazed, and believed there was no danger, and then I gazed till I forgot all danger. I thought you the proudest of women. My heart, steeled against you, and the infinite distance between us, made me believe I could behold you with chill admiration like a picture, and depart without emotion : but when I had once advanced, I had no power to retreat. Often I blessed your pride for

driving me from you ; but when I saw you again I wondered how I could think you proud. Often I parted from you with rooted scorn and hatred, and when I returned I hated myself for having felt it. I felt it was madness to meet you, to be near you ; and then with that jealousy of happiness which the miserable feel, I said to myself---To the man that must die, it matters not if he loves to gaze on the last lovely ray of light that gleams on his dungeon wall.

“ Increasing anguish forced reflexion on me. I fled from your sight : I wandered out, and saw you in solitude. I read, and your picture was on the page. At the moment I was about to rush into fight, that I might die and forget you, I discovered that I was not indifferent to you.

“ Till that moment I believed it impossible to struggle with my destiny, but from the time I felt you were interested in it all things seemed possible. Do you

remember the eventful night we met at Lady Kilcarrick's? I had resolved to disclose all that night, yet I shrank from the thought of confessing myself a rebel: I tried, by a tale of my banishment to America, to discover how you would bear the views of exile, and shame, and ruin that awaited me.

“Oh! the rapture and agony of my heart at the discovery, that even amid exile, shame, and ruin, you would not forsake me.

“That very night I flew to the cavern, where the band, now grown mutinous for action, nightly assembled. I was determined to break the bonds that held me, though my men should plant their pikes in my breast.

“I called them round me, and, conscious of a new mind within me, addressed them as I never had before. I know not what I said, but I remember having a flow and force of thought, an energy of persuasion, beyond what man perhaps

ever yet possessed. I exhibited the madness and atrocity of our enterprise; I acknowledged my crime in deluding them to join it. I adjured them to disperse, to surrender their arms; and if, as I feared, some suspicion of our design existed, to confess it, to throw themselves on the mercy of government, and make me their hostage or their sacrifice.

X “Whether they had long before been driven to think of this I know not; but all listened with patience, and some with conviction, and I am persuaded I should have led every man that night a loyal subject from the cavern of rebellion, when at that moment Wandesford, who had traced my footsteps from the castle, and discovered the passage to the cave, appeared standing among us. A hundred pikes were turned against him in a moment. I threw myself before him, and swore they should cut their way through me. But for me, he had never survived to betray us, nor had I been an outlaw now.

“ I could not bear to see a man who was sanctified in my eyes by being your lover thus murdered in secret, and my proud heart longed that the world might judge by our future lives which of us deserved you best.

“ When I had saved his life, I drew him apart—‘ Wandesford,’ I said, ‘ you have the truth. These men were rebels: they are no longer so. You have witnessed their repentance, their resolution to implore the mercy of government. I ask nothing from your gratitude; but I demand from you as a soldier and a man that you will be the first to intercede for them.’

“ He complied: he pledged his honour for his compliance. His honour!—villain!—that very day he rode to Galway; informed the magistrates that a rebellion was about to break out; and brought a detachment of his own regiment, to burn the tower, and drag my grandfather to the gibbet. ✓

“ Armida, you remember that night of horror. I met you on the heath : I told you we were destroyed by treachery : the tower had been invested by soldiers that evening. They saw I was prepared for defence, and called on me to surrender. I told them the only terms on which I would surrender : I demanded that my grandfather, against whom no treasonable fact could be proved, should remain unmolested ; that my adherents, who were willing to throw themselves on the mercy of government, should be spared. I offered to give up the arms which were deposited in the tower : I offered myself to follow them to prison, to death, if the laws of my country condemned me to death, provided his person and habitation, and those of my followers were spared. No terms would be accepted ; no proposal would be listened to : the language of the answer was literally— ‘ Come out and be hanged, or stay in and be burned.’ Seeing us, however, better

prepared than they expected, they retired for a reinforcement.

“ I saw you on the heath: I rushed out to bid you fly from me, and returned to perish with my grandfather. The band in the mean time had gathered in our defence, disposed as they were to submission and to peace. Their Milesian blood was burning at the thought of their aged chief and his grandson perishing like felons. I adjured, I commanded them to be gone and provide for their own safety in vain. They rose around me in numbers I could neither repel or manage; and when the soldiers returned we were in a condition to resist their assault.

“ While I and a few more poured an incessant fire from the narrow casements, my grandfather was conveyed away by some of his ancient followers, and by the time I hoped he was safe in the mountains, we gave up the old tower to the flames, and rushed from it among the

assailants. The madness of our dashing thus upon their bayonets scattered them for a moment, and we retreated to the mountains: but every inch of ground was fought with our faces to our pursuers, and not a step but what was bought by the life of one of my brave band. I will say I saw Wandesford fight bravely that night; he fought like a common soldier, but we could not meet. As night came on, the pursuit abated: the pursuers had suffered as well as we, and the few of us that survived reached the mountain by midnight.

“ Here we rested, in solitude, safety, and despair. The heath was our camp, the sky our tent, the elements our support, and life our only possession. When we had sunk on the earth for rest, and looked up to heaven for hope, we had exhausted every resource.

“ Oh, Armida! judge of the anguish and indignant regret of him who has led out a brave band only to perish, and who

feels in their suffering silence the condemnation of his rashness !

“ When I looked round, and saw them faint, scattered, and sore, their wounded limbs stiffening in the cold air, I could have thrown myself at Wandesford’s feet to beg mercy for them. But when my eye fell on my grandfather, who exhausted lay in my arms, his only shelter from the earth, my heart swelled again, and I swore before he exchanged that cold bed for a dungeon the grave should be mine.

“ Wandesford,’ I mentally and solemnly said, ‘ Wandesford, you have done this ; the blood of those that have perished will be on your head : you drove these men back at the moment they knocked at the gate of mercy : you forced to crime a child agonizing for a parent’s grey hairs. In the eye of him who reads the heart through darkness and suffering, I am innocent.’

“ We subsisted for some time as men driven to desperation must subsist.

While we were still learning to grapple with famine and winter, the guard one evening found a boy, who was supposed to have lost his way on the mountains. Struck with something mysterious in his appearance, they brought him to my hut. He implored me to dismiss them, and then throwing himself into my arms, acknowledged he was Gabriella. I still tremble when I think of that moment. Hardship I defy; danger I love; death itself I have encountered and braved; but a woman, fond and beautiful, kneeling and weeping; and to me, ignorant of women and their wiles; a man unsoothed, unsolicited, unloved.

“ In vain I represented the danger, the horror of our situation: she told me her passion had enabled her to defy them; and I knew it had.

“ I then confessed the impossibility of my ever returning her passion, were my views even more prosperous. I avowed the passion of my own heart; I boasted

of it, in hopes to wound her pride, and banish her infatuation. How shall I obtain pardon from my love's offended delicacy. She offered to hold the second place in my affections ; to be mine on any terms.

“ I shrunk from her shocked and repelled ; she followed ; she knelt to me, half intreating, half extorting compliance. The brilliant and tremendous contrast of passion and vice that her beauty displayed almost shook my resolution : my heart was untouched, but my senses were dazzled. At that moment, though hopeless of ever again beholding you, I repeated the name of Armida ; I felt as if the talisman of my heart was touched, and my guardian genius appeared before me in your image. I tore myself from her, to commune with my own heart and be still.

“ When I returned, I found her calm, and apparently resigned : she listened, she appeared convinced. I could

not expose her weakness to the band, for she had resumed her female dress, and at the risk of my life I led her back that night to her own mansion.

“ You saw me on the heath that night, Armida: ah! that you had heard me too!

“ The winter passed in fortifying our mountain retreat. Nature, as if to acknowledge the claims of her ancient Lord, threw round us an impassable fence of heath and lake, of mountain and moor, and invested us with storms that bid defiance to all assailants. We passed the winter in safety, stern and cold: we were unmolested like the savage in his den. Man dreaded to approach us: the attack of an enemy would have been almost welcome.

“ It was at this period that Wandesford, on his journey, fell into the hands of some of the men whom he had betrayed.—Oh! never will I forgive the meanness or the malignity of the wretch

who sheltered himself under the title of your husband ; or my own credulous precipitation for affording him that shelter.

“ I would not have assassinated him, but I would have called on him as a man mortally injured, and would have urged, have forced him to defend his claims to honour and to you, with his life.

“ The next day another party informed me that two females had been made prisoners : my heart was so full of you that the sound of two female prisoners struck on my ear without producing an idea except that of hastening to promise them safety and protection. Armida, I beheld you.

“ We must now, my love,” he added, with a trembling voice, “ take such counsel together as those who are in extremity must take. The emergency forces me to be plain and brief : while I speak,

perhaps your enlarged mind, perhaps the inspiration of love, may suggest some bright augury in this gloomy hour.

“ I have informed both magistrates and officers of the cause that had compelled me to assume the name and arms of a rebel. I have offered to submit, to take my trial at the bar of my country, and prove I am not voluntarily a traitor to it, provided my grandfather is spared, and the unhappy men who follow me be forgiven.

“ At first there seemed a disposition to treat me with lenity, but latterly I think I have read the spirit of Wandesford in the answers.

“ I have written again to the commanding officer of the district, and I have addressed him less as an officer than as a man.

“ I have told him of my sufferings, and my wrongs; of my resources and my desperation. I have stated my hu-

mility, my wish to expiate my offence by a public trial: and I have warned him with solemnity not to drive to extremity a man on whose word the lives of many wait.

“ For every drop of blood that has fallen in this frantic cause my own heart has dropped another, but if I am driven to despair, the west will be deluged with blood.

“ What answer this last appeal may receive I know not, but should it be implacable I am not less bereft of hope. I have maintained, by a chain of posts, a communication with the sea-shore—from this it will not be more than a march of two days. A passage thence to one of the islands is easy, and there we can defy all assault from the roughness of the waves and the rockings of the shore, till some vessels reach us, and the waves of the Atlantic that moat my paternal isles.

bear their exiled possessor and his followers to America."

He paused, and looked timidly up at Armida, trembling at his temerity.

"Ah!" said Armida, while her beautiful features melted with tenderness, and gleamed with hope, "can you doubt my following you wherever peace and security may be found, when I have not hesitated to follow you even here."

In the quickened lustre of her lover's eyes, in his broken respiration, Armida read her answer; but this silent eloquence was interrupted by the sentinels announcing the arrival of an express.

"I must go," cried Connal, starting from her feet: "ah! while here, I forget not only the duties, but the cares of humanity."

Anxiously and vainly the fugitives

waited for his return, or for some intelligence at this momentous crisis. No messenger arrived, and towards morning, exhausted, they retired to rest.

CHAP. III.

ARMIDA sunk into a profound sleep, and fancy, more propitious to her than fortune, visited her dreams with images of Connal.

She thought she was in Italy again, surrounded by a splendid assembly; she was singing to them when Connal entered.

The company seemed to view him with astonishment, and she broke off her song to resign her harp to him. He touched it, and every chord was instantly broken; and a melancholy murmur succeeded those brilliant and commanding tones which the moment before she seemed to be drawing from it. The scene then changed to those romantic shores where she first beheld him.

He wandered before her at a distance, which, though apparently small, she could never overtake : sometimes he stood on a rock, which she vainly tried to ascend ; sometimes on the brink of a stream, across which he beckoned her, but which it was impossible for her to pass : yet, soothed by his image, her slumber was delicious, and she wept with that luxurious sense of grief that in sleep appears to bring the recollection of many years, and unite the present and the past, the living and the dead, in its visionary associations.

It was late in the evening, when awaking, she leaned forward, and saw Rosine and the woman, who was weeping, sitting at the side of her couch ; and her feelings, quick in the discovery of evil, suggested no favourable omen from their looks.

She started from her pallet, and inquired the cause.

“ My dear Armida,” said Rosine,

“there is no time to preface what we must tell. Connal’s last appeal has been rejected! he has been told to expect nothing but the utmost severity. The camp has broken up—they are all on their march to the sea-coast, and Connal waits with the last detachment to guard you hence.”

As she spoke, the woman burst into an agony of tears and exclamations, and Rosine, incensed at her adding to the terrors of the moment, turned to her with a look of anger.

“It is not for myself,” said she, sobbing, “it is for O’Morven!—oh! none but an angel from Heaven ever looked or stood as he did when the news came; and we were all to fly for our lives. Oh! such a cry as went up from the camp—the men raving, and the women and children screaming and crying; and to see him commanding and comforting them all in a breath; working and labouring among the lowest of them, and

cheering them with his own blessed voice, that creatures that were hardly able to crawl out of their huts, and were forced to set off, with two or three childer along with them, and not so much as a sod of turf in their hands: still they bid God bless him as they went, and now and then he'd seem to wipe his forehead with his hand, but it was his eyes he wiped, to see them. Oh! God will not desert him in his hour of need, for he never yet made such another creature in the world."

"Rosine," said Armida, "dismiss this woman, and assist me, for the last time: you must not be a partaker of this dreadful journey. I have no right to drag you any further—an escort shall attend you from this place to your uncle's. You know I have interest here," she added, with a painful smile.

"Ah! my dear Armida," said Rosine, no longer restraining her tears, "you must indeed dismiss me; for I

feel, that though I might die in this situation, it is impossible I could live in it long."

"Judge then the effect of this exalted character on my heart," said Armida, with solemn feeling. "I was reared in luxury, such as few of my sex have known, yet at this moment there is no prospect connected with his fate that has terrors for me. Judge me not by these trembling hands, or these broken accents," said she, as Rosine was assisting her. "Judge me by the unshrinking resolution with which I follow his perilous flight."

She then looked for a moment on her splendid travelling dress, which had been prepared for the English journey—

"Ah!" said she, "this splendour is not for a fugitive!" and she was going to take off the ornaments that fastened it, when, feeling that Connal might be wounded by this appearance of self-neglect, she desisted.

“When are we to set out?” said she, after a pause.

“Not till midnight,” said Rosine, “for Connal and his party will remain till last on the mountain, and light fires to deceive the troops that he believes to be hovering near him, and our departure will be delayed till then, that he may protect us himself.”

“It yet wants two hours of that time,” said Armida, “and before we part, seek, I entreat you, an opportunity of making one more appeal to his heart on my behalf. I tremble at the thought of thus wandering alone, the unlicensed companion of the man I love. While you were with me, I felt your presence a protection, but of that a few hours must now deprive me.

“Ah! let us be united, let me have but a sanctioned claim to encounter danger and distress with him, and what is there I will shrink from?—No woman had ever less distrust of her lover, or less

dread of the world. Alas ! my present situation is a proof that I have no object in the world but himself ; but there is an unknown danger before me that deters even me. The world may say she loved unfortunately, but let it not say she loved unworthily."

Rosine, her heart glowing at sentiments so congenial to her own, hastened out amid the tumult and darkness in search of Connal, yet when she found herself on the heath, amid armed men, and flying women, in all the rude confusion of a rebel army, she dreaded that amid such circumstances the distracted mind of Connal could scarce have leisure to listen, or feel the appeal she was about to make. Of the stragglers who were loitering about she in vain inquired for him ; their terror scarce permitted them to hear or answer, and though at a distance on the heath, she saw some bodies of men preparing to march, among whom their leader probably was.

Their wild and martial appearance, combined with the darkness, the clamour, the crowd, the cries of various distress, and the sound of military command, deterred her from approaching them; and though ashamed of her fears, she was returning, when near the building that had served them for an abode she saw a man extended on the ground, by the light of a fire that had been just kindled, and whose blaze was reflected in his polished pike that he had struck into the earth beside it.

She approached to inquire for Connal, the man raised his head, and she discovered the object of her search. The deep expression of thoughtful woe in his countenance as she beheld it banished at first the thoughts with which she had sought him, and she only said, as he silently raised his eyes to her :

“Your mind is heavy, dear Connal, with the anticipation of some danger.”

"No, my dear Rosine, danger is almost too near for anticipation, yet I was not thinking of danger : every precaution that the human mind, my mind at least, could suggest for the security of this midnight march has been taken : the event is not within the reach even of thought, and the event must be left to that Power who sometimes interferes for the unfortunate : my toils, my struggles, my blood are for my men, but my thoughts, in this hour of solitude, are my own."

"Do I intrude then?" said Rosine, timidly retiring:—"I would not for worlds increase the burthen of this heavy hour."

"No, no : the sound of your friendly voice is refreshing to me ; don't go from me, Rosine : I have been a hero all day," he added with a sad smile. "Let me, for a few moments at least, be a man, or less."

As he spoke, a tear, or something like

it, seemed to fall on his cheek, and Rosine, terrified at the omen, exclaimed :

“ Oh, then there must be danger.”

“ These never fell for danger yet,” said Connal, wiping away the drops, while his eyes flashed with all their proud lustre once more : “ the parting of soul and body could not wring one from me ; but, Rosine, to see the first of women following me in this hopeless extremity, divested of all she has been accustomed to, surrounded by every thing she is abhorrent from—to see her thus, and be compelled to smile on her in my despair, this makes me as far below her in resolution this moment as I must for ever be in desert.”

Rosine attempted consolation, but her own gloomy apprehensions checked her, and she was silent.

“ Would to Heaven,” said Connal, yielding to the bitterness of his feelings, “ she had never beheld me—better she had been united to Wandesford, to any

one whose happier lot would have preserved her from the evils of mine; better than thus to sully the brightness of her mind among desperate men and desperate deeds: why did I ever raise my eyes to her? selfish, savage, remorseless that I was, to tear those flowers of paradise from their bed, only to see them wither beside me on this heath of blood."

"And here she would rather wither, here she would rather die," said Rosine, "than live in palaces with Wandesford."

"And she shall not," cried Connal, starting from the ground, "she shall not, if all the might that ever was in the arm of man, if all the energies of a mortal mind can save her. Forgive me, Rosine, for my coward despondency; my mind is wrung with many cares, and I know not what I said. Oh, who can despair of the aid of heaven, when its visible angel, stronger than a host, is on our side."

At this moment of tenderness Rosine

anxiously urged the appeal which, in the fluctuations of Connal's mind, she had almost forgotten; and she represented the distress of Armida at being yet without a legal claim to partake his destiny, and she intreated him by their immediate union to relieve her feelings from a burthen which pressed on them more heavily than all the evils that menaced her.

Connal paused for a moment, and then he said in a tone of stern decision :

“ Never, never, Rosine ! never shall it be said by her proud family, or by a false world, that O'Morven stole the daughter of Lord Montclare, and forced her, in an hour of danger and distress, to accept the condemned hand of a leader of banditti. I am not worthy of her : I am an outlaw : in the struggle I am engaged in if I perish, I perish, and the remembrance of my misfortunes without my shame will remain to her. But, if by one lion-bound I break through my toils, and scatter those blood-hounds

that beset and bait me now on every side, then, in the face of the world, and in honour, will I woo and wed her, and then, the man who moves but his finger against her does not hold life at a moment's value."

Rosine knew it was in vain with Connal to oppose a resolution derived from feeling high-strained and romantic as it was, and she then besought him at least to visit Armida before their departure, and support her resolution by his presence.

"And will she admit me?" said Connal: "during this dreadful day I feared nothing but her sight, and though I lay down beneath these walls, I did not dare to enter them."

But at Rosine's intreaties he followed her, till at the door of Armida's apartment, hiding his face with his hands, he shrunk back, and did not enter till he heard Armida's voice inquiring for him.

There was no light in the room: the gleams of a rising moon broke feebly through the dismantled windows: Armida, pale, but collected, sat on her humble couch.

He rushed in, and clasped her in his arms: there was not a word spoken. Rosine's audible sobs were the only sounds heard for an hour. During that time Connal often pressed his love to his heart, and often tried to whisper consolation to her, but his words were inarticulate; though, from the tones of his voice, Armida derived more solace than from the utmost eloquence of passion.

At length two men entering the room announced that they were ready to attend Rosine on her journey. Armina, starting from Connal's arms, then clung round Rosine.

"Best and first of friends," she cried, in agony, "never, never forget your Armida. Remember that in a happier

destiny she loved and cherished you. How little did I then think I should need your compassion, that I should even solicit your prayers ! yet bestow them on me, Rosine, for you are good and religious, and those that love Heaven alone Heaven will love."

"The blessing of Heaven," cried the sobbing Rosine, "and mine be ever with you. Oh ! Armida, in any other situation, no duty, no force should ever, ever have divided us ; and even now a word would make me stay. May the greatness of your heart meet its recompense ! Ah ! to me it seems as if no object on earth was at this moment worthy of you. Connal, Connal, what a responsibility is your's !"

They wept in silent sorrow on each other's bosoms, till Armida, extending her arms to Connal, exclaimed :

"I have now nothing left on earth but you—but I wish for nothing more."

Connal received her in his arms, and

while with one he held her to his heart, the other, raised to Heaven, attested his solemn appeal :

“ And when this fails you, may Heaven and its hope fail me ! ”

Rosine, tearing herself from them, turned to her conductors, and she observed that Connal, with feeling precaution, had selected men who had formerly been tenants to her uncle, and to whom she was personally known.

She trusted herself to them with confidence, or at least seemed to do so, from compassion to Armida ; and waving her hand, with the faint and temporary triumph of affection over grief, she broke from them ; while her boding heart whispered that she now beheld those whom alone she loved on earth for the last time.

When Connal believed her at a distance, and that Armida's feelings would not be harassed by again beholding her,

he raised her, and gently, but firmly, led her from the apartment.

It was now midnight: fires were blazing on the heath, and their broad and flaring light was reflected from so many fierce, dark visages, and wild figures, half lost in the obscurity of night, that Armida at first started back from a picture wilder than even her imagination had presented.

The men bowed with submission as she approached, and though shuddering at their sight, she tried to assume some self-command, and return their homage by a motion of graceful dignity, which raised their admiration almost to a rude murmur of applause.

Connal, who had thrown his arm around her as he supported her tottering steps from the building, removed it when he saw the men, and led her forward with a majestic deference that inspired its own feeling in all who beheld her.

The way they had to traverse was impassable to any vehicle: Connal placed her on his horse, and then motioning to a young man of the most prepossessing appearance to attend her, hurried through the ranks to see if all was ready. The men were all impatient to begone, and after a few words to support their resolution, the sound of "March" burst from his lips in thunder, and was echoed from rank to rank till the very spirit of it seemed roused to catch and return the sound.

The next moment he was at her side, and she now for the first time since her arrival remarked the change in his appearance. He had thrown off the Irish dress, and wore a cavalry uniform of green, but still retained the mantle and the braided sandals of his former habit: his neck was uncovered, but for the thick curls that sometimes broke from beneath his heavy helmet: his cheek was pale with toil and thought, but his large re-

fulgent eye, gleaming with the mingled lustre of pride and grief, was almost too bright to encounter : and as he approached Armida, the regal dignity of his figure, mixed with the pride of the avowed leader of a host, filled her with a spirit like his own, and she said to herself. Ah ! no wonder such a man aspires to govern, whom nature herself seems to have marked, like Saul, for empire."

The march began, the fires that were every where blazing on the mountain shewed distinctly the arms and movements of the men who were near her, and though there was nothing like the regularity of disciplined troops, either in their weapons or array, yet their stature, strength, and a gloomy resolution that seemed borrowed from their leader, made Armida shudder at the idea of such men being encountered. Far below, the great body of the rebel army was in motion, in dim and tumultuous obscurity, and but when a pike or a standard flashed out in

the light, as the wind waved the broad and spreading volumes of flame downward on the declivities of the mountain, the whole band seemed like a cloud rolling from its summit to its base. There was no sound but the heavy tramp of numerous feet on the dry heath, and the quick and eager voices that called out to avoid the precipices in their descent, except when old Cormac, who still marched by Connal's side, under the impulse of enthusiasm, which neither age nor fear could quell, struck a martial chord on his harp, and then sighing at its lonely hollow tones sunk into silence. Connal did not speak, and he even seemed disturbed when the wind waved Armida's veil, and displayed her figure for a moment to the gaze of the men: his heart swelled with agony at the thought of the high-born Armida thus being seen by the eyes of rebel peasantry, the public companions of their leader: and he would not speak, lest the sound of her

voice in answer should reach their ears. They had now quitted the mountain, and entered on the moor, that lay waste and wide at its base: the night was totally dark, the fires on the distant mountain twinkled like stars, and dreary and inauspicious as their light, Armida beheld their decay with a reluctant eye; when she viewed the dim heath before her, and the figures that passing over it seemed like a shadowy host on the confines of the world of darkness.

The silence, the darkness, and the midnight march of this invisible army, which she felt around her on every side, without being able to distinguish them, filled her with a kind of visionary dejection; and almost appalled at her situation, she said:—

“ This is not like the march of an army. Can the spirits of these men be sustained without music, or any of the pride and circumstance of war: to me they appear like spirits moving to the land where all things are forgotten.”

"The burthen of their cause sits heavy on them," said Connal, with deep and agitated feeling. "If they were victorious this moment, what would victory bring to rebels?—the desolation of their native land, the curses of their countrymen. Ah! it is a different thing to march to battle with the imagined shouts of posterity ringing in your ears, and to go forward with danger urging you behind, and infamy shrouding your prospects. No, let the trumpet sound for soldiers: rebels march with a halter round their necks."

"Why did you leave your mountain retreat," said Armida, struck with these gloomy words, "if you march only to destruction? There we were safe."

"I could not hazard an engagement," said Connal: "flight alone remained to us: and why should I conceal the truth, you were the cause of that flight, or in our wild mountain fortress we would

have stood or fallen, till none remained, either to beg for the mercy, or to swell the triumph of our enemies."

"And was I the cause of your removal?" said Armida, agitated alike by his tenderness and his gloom. "Then my presence has increased your sufferings and your dangers. Ah! shall we ever reach the isles in safety?"

"We will, my love, we will: had danger been on the way, we should have met it already: all the loose and straggling adventurers of our band, with the women and children, set forward this morning; for if left behind I knew they would never overtake, and had the enemy been near, the report would already have reached us through them."

The dreadful thought that they had perhaps perished and could now neither warn nor join their friends crossed Armida's mind, but she gave it no utterance, and her own increasing danger banished all

visionary fears, for they had now entered on a morass, through which but one narrow track led, and those who missed it were immersed to their knees; and their clamours and struggles, increased by the darkness of the night, and mixed with the cries of many who sunk to rise no more, filled Armida with horror. Connal, again compelled to quit her, consigned her to the care of the young man, whom he called Brennan, and hurried among his band, where his voice and presence, operating with his orders, produced instant tranquillity, and the sufferers struggled on without a murmur when they beheld their chief on foot, exposed to the same difficulties with the meanest of them, by his personal strength rescuing many, and by his patience supporting all. On his return to Armida he felt with his hands for the track, and then lifting her off the horse, and giving the reins to Brennan, bore her along in his arms; but the moment he

withdrew the tumult was renewed, and some of the men coming up, complained loudly of the difficulties of the way, and proposed that the band should remain where they were till the morning broke.

“ Fool !” said Connal, “ go back and tell them that O’Morven gives orders, but does not receive them.”

The men retired, but in a short time returned, declaring that it was impossible for the men to continue their march through a track where they sunk up to their ankles at every step.

Connal made no answer, but stooping down he unbraced his sandals, and threw them at a distance from him.

“ Go,” said he, raising his proud figure, “ go and tell the cowards that sent you that you saw O’Morven march barefoot on the ground they are afraid of.”

The men retired in silence, and in a few moments a loud shout of applause testified their confidence in their leader, and they moved patiently onward.

After a march of four hours, the morning breaking faintly, shewed about a mile off the faint grey outlines of the mountain, the first of a chain, beyond which lay the shores of the Atlantic: a loud and joyful shout burst from the rebels when they beheld it, and this sound, savage and terrific as it was, restored the spirits of Armida, and already she imagined herself in the safe obscurity of the islands. As they advanced, Connal drawing aside Brennan, pointed out to him some object on the brow of the mountain.

"It is only the mist of the morning," said Brennan; "it is dispersing already; I see it moving down the side of the mountain."

Connal then shewed it to another, who also affirmed it to be a cloud.

"It is a cloud," said Connal, fixing his eye on it, "that will burst in thunder ere long."

As the light grew stronger, they could

discern a multitude of people descending from the mountain, with speed and terror in their motions, and they soon recognized them to be their companions, who had preceded them in their march the day before : appalled at the sight, the rebels stopt in confusion, but Connal knowing their present situation was the worst they could encounter danger in, urged them forward, and the first fugitives soon reached them with outcries of terror, which Connal could not silence till they had spread consternation through every heart but his own. They described their sufferings in passing the morass the preceding day, the numbers that had perished, and the numbers that were perishing on the mountain from fatigue and want of food ; and they added, that when dispirited and exhausted they reached the mountain, they learned that a numerous body of soldiers were stationed there, to intercept and drive them back on another party, who by this

time were in possession of the camp. Connal listened without a sign of dismay, and inquired if they had seen any of the soldiers whom they fled from: all denied they had, except one man, who persisted in saying he had seen them march along the ridge of an opposite mountain. Connal, in the hope that this was but the creation of fear, immediately ordered his men to march up the mountain, as he knew that any eminence they might gain would be a better point of resistance, even if an enemy were to meet them. The straggling and unarmed peasantry, with the women and children who had composed the first party, were then thrown into the rear, and they began to ascend the mountain. The few huts on it had been deserted by the inhabitants the night before, on the arrival of the former party of rebels, and they met with no one who could tell them whether safety or danger awaited there progress. Half way up the ascent there was a wide

and level heath, and here, while they halted to recover breath and to reconnoitre, a body of military appeared suddenly emerging from a heathy rock that bounded it, and forming themselves rapidly into a line on its summit.

All doubt was now over : an engagement was inevitable, and Connal, drawing up his exhausted and scattered ranks into what order he could, prepared for it ; but first, with an agonized heart, he looked round to see what shelter the heath afforded for Armida. There was a cottage at some distance, constructed like most of those on the Galway mountains, of sods propped by the aid of the large mountain-stones that formed its only substantial wall : there he desired Brennan to conduct her, and the wretched women, whose fathers, brothers, and husbands were about to be engaged, feeling something like protection from her presence, crowded round her. The horror of her situation had taken from her all

power of reflection or resistance; she would have staid with Connal, but she tried in vain to collect the former energies of her mind in this hour, and the ghastly smile with which she tried to illuminate her features spoke despair, not resolution.

When they reached the cottage, she sunk on the ground, and as Brennan hurried back to the field, with locked hands and breathless agony of expression, she seemed to utter some request for which speech was denied her. Brennan broke from her, and the women, forgetting their own sufferings in the distress of one to whom they looked as to some superior being, gathered round her with unavailing consolation.

Yet she tried to answer them with movements that expressed gratitude, till the tremendous sound of the firing producing a universal cry of horror among her companions, stunned every sense, and clasping her hands closely round her

head, she tried if possible to shut them out; but the sounds that her imagination suggested were still more horrible, and she tried to catch amid the actual sounds some that intimated comfort.

The cottage was crowded with women who were all bewailing with Irish vociferation the danger of their relatives, but their complaints were unintelligible to her, till a tall, pale, thin figure, wrapped in a long mantle, stalked into the hut, and sat down by Armida, repeating in inward and heart-broken tones, "My murdered jewel!" and this exclamation incessantly and monotonously repeated without any change of word or accent struck on Armida's heart more painfully than all the cries of horror and grief uttered by the rest.

"My murdered jewel! look at him!" she continued, and opening her mantle, saw a boy of three years old dying in her arms.

The women, who had still some com-

passion for Armida, gathered round to prevent her seeing the dying agonies of the child.

"Let her look at him," said the woman, "she will think little of her own grief when she sees mine."

"What can be done for him?" said Armida: "what is he dying of?"

"Hunger," said the mother, raising her eyes, and fixing them with a ghastly look on Armida.

"Hunger! and so am I, but I don't feel it; there are many as bad as her," said one of the women.

"There is none as bad as me," repeated the sufferer, "for this was all I had left. I lost my father and my two brothers, and no one heard me raise my voice. The father of this child dropt down before me, yet still I went on with the men, but now I can go on no longer. Oh, God!" she cried, with a sudden shriek of agony, "I would sell him to any of

the soldiers that would give a morsel of food."

At that moment the child, in a dying convulsion, caught hold of a part of Armida's habit.

"He is alive again!" said the mother, "he's playing, see he's playing with her."

The child carried it to his mouth, and attempted to gnaw it.

"Merciful Heaven! is there no food? is there nothing to save its life?" cried Armida.

The child, attracted by the sound of her voice, feebly stretched out his arms to her. The women about her would have dissuaded her from taking it.

"Ah!" said she, "every thing unfortunate seems to know, and cling to me:" and again she inquired were there no means of preserving it. And this salutary exertion of humanity saved her some moments of reflection on her own misery. One of the women said there was milk in

a cabin at some distance, but no one would venture out for fear of meeting the men.

"I will go," said Armida: "if they are men, I have nothing to fear from them."

"Angel of glory! will you go?" said the woman, holding her with a delirious laugh.

The woman endeavoured to prevent her, but Armida, whose courage was wound by horror to a pitch above nature, quitted the hut with the child in her arms. Not an individual of either party was visible through the cloud of smoke that covered the heath, and which was only broke for a moment by the gleaming of the rebels' pikes, and this preserved her courage.

At a little distance there was a hut, into which, hardly now knowing for what, she entered. A wounded man was stretched on the ground; he had been left by his companions, and was trying

to reach a drink they had placed near him. Armida, kneeling beside him, intreated for a little.

"Take it," said the dying man, who thought she was petitioning for herself: "it may do you good, it can do me none—I am gone."

"It is for this infant," said Armida.

"God bless you! God bless you!" said the rebel, "that can think of a poor child at such a time as this:" then slowly raising his glazed and sunken eyes to her face, he recognized her, and uttered a groan. "Oh! King of Heaven!—is it you? is there no better place than this hovel for you now?"

"Oh! talk not of me," said Armida: "how is O'Morven? is he wounded? is he in danger?"

"O'Morven," said the man, whose senses were departing: "O'Morven, I can fight for you no more! you have had the lives of my three brave boys; and

now you have mine—and I can give you no more.”

His eyes closed, and though his lips moved, it was with the convulsions of death. A momentary trance saved Armida the horror of seeing his last struggles. When she recovered, she was unconscious of her situation, but she felt that if she staid beside the dead body her reason would soon forsake her, and she tried to rise from the ground.

Her little charge was too at rest; the effort it had made to swallow the nourishment had put an end to its pangs, and the infant and the warrior lay silently together. She had a vague idea that she would disturb their sleep, and she glided from the hut with the light step of madness, and wandered over the heath without thinking of returning to the cottage. The whole scene of war was now before her: the firing had ceased.

Connal, on leading his men to meet the enemy, discovered that they were on an

eminence, and between them lay a deep and narrow glen, through which a mountain stream ran struggling with the stones that were scattered on its bed. He led his men along the ridge of the glen, in the vain hope of discovering some place where they were less exposed to the assault of the enemy, or had a chance of compelling them to an immediate engagement. But in the mean time, the close and well-directed fire of the soldiers thinned his ranks at every step, while they, only armed with pikes, possessing but few muskets, and ill acquainted with the use of those, were little more than an unresisting mark for the fire of the disciplined troops.

Connal saw his best and bravest men fall on every side, without either resistance or defence, and who now felt it impossible to retreat, as the other party were already in sight at the extremity of the heath, conceived and executed in a moment one of those desperate

ideas which great minds seem to have the privilege of extracting safety from. He did not communicate it to a being near him, not even to Brennan, of whose resolution and courage he had the highest sentiments; he trusted alone for its effect to the force of action, and throwing himself from his horse, with his sword alone in his hand, rushed into the chasm, and wading knee-deep through the water, began to ascend the opposite side, with a hundred balls whistling round his head. The boldest of his men stood appalled at this desperate step, and except Brennan not one dared to follow him, till they saw him engaged hand to hand, grappling for life with a serjeant, a man of gigantic strength and stature, who had rushed from the ranks in the hope of dashing him down the precipice: then, with one dreadful shout, the whole party plunged into the glen, and for a moment it appeared to Armida as if the earth had swallowed them up. Wading, climbing,

hanging to the rocks with one hand and brandishing their pikes with the other, multitudes falling or hurled down, still multitudes struggled up the precipitous side of the glen: their extended pikes now repelled their assailants, whose fire passed over their heads.

Connal, after dashing his antagonist down the rocks, was the first to reach the summit. The contest was now fierce and dreadful beyond all example of ordinary conflicts; it was a struggle for life, man to man, and hand to hand, decided by mere personal strength and courage, almost without weapons: they fought with hand, foot, and head, grappling each other's throats, and feeling that if even an inch of ground was lost, life was gone. Bodily strength and mere despair at length obtained the victory. The ghastly wounds and resistless thrust of the pikes in this close engagement broke the ranks of the infantry, and the rebels, after a tremendous contest, remained masters of the field. The in-

fantry were supported by a strong party of cavalry, whose object was after the ranks were broken by the discharge of musketry to charge among them, and do their usual execution with the sword. Connal perceived them approaching, and remembering the event of the engagement in 1798, in which the Lords O'Neil and Mountjoy fell, drew up his wounded and scattered ranks in as close order as the broken ground admitted, and received the charge upon their extended pikes: these the cavalry, after every effort of skill and courage was exhausted, found it impossible to penetrate, and at length retired.

The party who were advancing on the opposite side of the heath saw the fortune of the day, and after hovering some time in a hostile attitude on the field, retreated also. Connal and his men, gasping from a struggle for life, almost distrusting the evidence of their eyes, looked round the heath, and saw not an

enemy remaining. Armida, from an eminence, beheld all this : in the general and wide-raging horror of the scene she had lost all discrimination ; she heard the firing without shrinking, and saw wounds and death without feeling ready to die herself at the sight. Her crushed and close-drawn heart had room but for one thought—the event—the dreadful event ; life or death : she was scarce conscious of drawing a breath till the wild but animating shouts of the rebels announced their victory.

Connal, the moment he was secure of it, rushed through the glen again, and mounting his horse, galloped over the heath in quest of her. The cottage where he had left her was filled with the wounded, and he felt fear for the first time that day when he found she was not there. She saw him first, but in a moment he was at her feet ; and all war-stained, darkened, and toil-worn as he was, he appeared more than human : the

flush of passion, the pride of victory, the concentrated lustre of the warrior and the lover, of every soft and sublime emotion that irradiate—humanity made her think herself with all her sacrifices unworthy such a being.

“Are you alive?” he cried; “have you your reason amid the horror I have plunged you into?”

“Ah!” cried Armida, astonished to behold the man trembling at her feet who a moment past was dealing and encountering death at every step, “is it possible amid such scenes you can think of me?”

“Think of you!” he cried, straining her to his heart: “if there was energy in my thoughts, if there was force in my arm to-day, it was only when I thought of you.”

Brennan and some of the principal rebels then came up with the intelligence that their scouts had discovered the route of the defeated army: they had traced

them to a course opposite to that which the rebels intended to pursue, whose passage to the sea was now unobstructed; and there was a village at the distance of about a mile where they might halt and procure refreshments on their march.

A short council was then held, and Connal, struggling with a wish to allow Armida a short respite, and the conviction that it was necessary for his men immediately to reach the shore, did not himself venture to speak, while his eloquent eyes turned on her spoke all the solicitude of his heart.

The rebels, after a short debate, determined to pass that day in the village; if food was to be found there, to leave a number of their party to attend their sick and wounded in the cottages scattered on the heath, and pursue their march towards the shore at the close of night. They then set forward, and Armida, when she saw Connal panting from the recent fight, and bleeding with un-

bound wounds, march by her side with firm step, and eyes illuminated with tenderness, almost felt it a crime to be conscious of either weakness or terror. Their journey was protracted by Connal's taking a remote route that he might spare Armida the dreadful sight of the field strewn with the dead and the dying; and they did not reach the village till evening.

The people at first fled at their approach, and the few who were left in the cottages received them as men who came to murder and to spoil, for the neighbourhood was remarkable for loyalty, and had raised for the protection of the country a corps of yeoman cavalry, from whose vigilance the rebels had often suffered in their excursions: they were prepared for the worst therefore, when they heard that the military were defeated, and the rebels on their march towards them: and Connal, who knew from the sanguinary spirit of outlaws flushed

with unexpected victory, that their fears were but too just, was compelled to exert all that personal force and awe which is the substitute for discipline among such a band, to check their aggressions. While every limb reeked with toil, and smarted with wounds, neglectful of refreshment or rest, he rode from house to house to appease the terrors and protect the property of the inmates, and save them not only from violence but from insult. Provisions were liberally supplied, and Connal, intent only on the wants of his men, forgot his own, till all he could procure to satisfy them was bread and water—of these he was partaking, stretched on the ground, when Brennan came up.

“Is this your food, captain?”

“It is,” said Connal, smiling.

“The meanest man in the army would have thought it hard fare after such a day,” said Brennan.

“And I should blush,” said Connal,

"if the meanest man in my army could bear privations better than his leader."

"Ah! captain, you are fit to command better men, and in a better cause."

"I might have been," said Connal, mentally, and a tear started in his eye, but he turned from his companion as he wiped it away.

The march was renewed at night: their course again lay over the trackless moor and the barren mountain, and though the wildness of the scenery at times dismayed Armida, yet its deep solitude, flattering the mind with the image of impenetrable security, soothed and appeased her. It was about midnight, that after winding down the side of a mountain, they suddenly plunged into a glen, whose depth, and darkness, and hollow echoes, made them feel as if their progress was checked by an immersion into a vault. The beetling rocks that seemed to meet above their heads; the moonlight faintly tinting their crags,

and sometimes darting through a rift a gleam that chequered the glen; the red, hoarse stream that raved through it, broken and tormented by masses of stone that seemed to have tumbled from the precipices above, filled even the rudest mind there with reluctant awe. As they advanced, Armida cast her eyes upwards: the arching precipices above scarce gave room for the twinkling of a single star, and the numerous trampling of so many feet, compressed and deepened in their passage through the chasm, seemed to her like the roar of distant cannon. The horrors of that morning rushed on her imagination; her heart sickened with fear, and she forbore to express it only because she knew the heart of Connal beat still stronger than her own with apprehension for her safety; even he felt the thrill of the place, and though wrapt in meditation, spoke merely to disperse the silence. Armida answered that she might not appear insensible of his kindness, but

her fears rendered her almost unconscious of what she was saying. After a few broken sentences uttered at random by each, they relapsed into silence: Connal then forcing himself to speak, mentioned something abruptly of the skirmish that morning.

"Good heaven!" cried Armida, starting at the name; "do you call that dreadful conflict a skirmish?"

"Ah!" said Connal, the tear trembling in his eye, "I beg in vain to familiarize you to what my own mind revolts from? Pardon me, my love; it was a bloody day, but you are safe."

As he spoke, they suddenly emerged from the chasm, and the ocean and its moonlight shores burst on their view.

The rebels uttered a wild and tremendous shout of joy as the hope of safety appeared, and this sound, rising on the perfect stillness of night, and the solitude of nature, was the most awful Armida had ever heard. They paused for a

moment, uncertain of the direction they were to take, till the guides advanced.

"What a night!" exclaimed Connal; "the spirit scarce seems to move on the surface of the waters."

"Ah!" said Armida, viewing the blue, deep concave, "I never beheld such a sky without imagining there was in its bosom some place of rest for me, some elysium isle in that ocean of light; far and deep, where the souls of the happy waited to receive me."

"This is the last time I shall traverse these shores then," said Connal, gazing round him: "It is the last time I shall tread this ground, and say this is my native land; and I have wandered here free as the winds, without a crime and without a care. I would not have believed a prophet that had told me that I should tread them what I am now."

"But there are other lands, and climates more bright and benign," said Armida, whose imagination already was

in Italy: "in that land of the sun where I passed my youth, the land of flowers and harmony, where rivers, whose murmur is music, flow through her garden-plains, there alone can we be happy."

"I never can be happy out of Ireland," cried Connal: "I love her grey and showery sky; I love her gloom: it is native to me: her misty heath, her bleak shore, the sullen song of her storms, and her caves, and her ocean, are in unison with the chords of my soul. The glare of Italy is an insult to the exile: it reflects no image of the country his aching eyes are strained to recall."

Armida trembled at the difference of their characters, and at the little hope she had of entire influence over a mind so national, yet she could not resign her own sentiments, and she ventured to say:

"A country that excites no recollections can have no power over the mind, but from its weakness: the tomb of

Achilles inspired Alexander with the conquest of the east, and amid the ruins of Rome Gibbon conceived the idea of the history of its falling empire."

"And I too have recollections," exclaimed Connal: "on this spot my ancestors were princes, and their descendant has not where to lay his head."

The boat that conveyed them to the isle glided rapidly along a calm and moonlight sea: the air was fresh, the night heavenly; and Armida contrasting her present situation with the horror and danger of the morning, would have dissolved into visions of hope, but for the inquietude of Connal: leaning far over the stern, he fixed his eyes on the shore they were quitting.

"Farewel, my country: he who is banished from you would resign for an acre of that barren rock the fairest possessions of earth: he would shed his heart's best blood for the meanest of your children.-- Oh! that his lot had been to

have died for you rather than have fought against you."

"Ah!" said Armida, mentally, "his country was his first love, and from such a heart its early impressions never can be effaced: his country will also be his last."

She did not speak, but by the light of the moon Connal saw the tear that trembled in her eye.

"Armida, there are moments when I could almost plunge a sword into my heart to give relief to its intolerable swellings: love, grief, and disdain of my fate, are tearing it to pieces. Alas! amid all my crimes, spare me at least that of causing you a tear: my misfortunes may sometimes wring one from you, but from this moment my passions shall be as hushed before you as this calm and blessed night."

*Fragments of Armida's letters to Rosine,
during her stay in the isles.*

“ My past existence has often appeared like a dream to me, but my present one still more resembles it: I am not visionary ; real sufferings have rather diminished my imagination ; yet there are many moments in the day when I find it hard to credit my own existence. Con-
nal is gone, and I have lived three months in an island in the Atlantic, with one female servant, whose solitary figure makes no more impression on me than the rocks I see from my hut.

“ He is gone on a wild hope ; but to the desperate, only desperate things can give hope. He was informed that a person of the first consequence had expressed the highest admiration of his character, and declared he would personally undertake to procure his and his followers' pardons, if he would come to Dublin and throw

himself on the mercy of government. He went, deriving a hope from the greatness of his own mind, which I fear that of no other will justify. The rebels are dispersed through the isles, I believe unmolested by any attacks, as their enemies probably wait till the severity of winter compels them to visit the shore; but of the living world I know nothing."

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"I have no hope of hearing from you, and little of these lines ever reaching you; yet I write all day, for my thoughts flow calmly in the deep silence around me, and to write to you is no interruption of that quiet indolence that I feel invading every faculty.

"How breathless is the solitude on every side; nature seems to have formed it on the sabbath after the creation; the winds and waters are all that remind me of existence, and even they seem only like the echo of the similar sounds in the living world: this apparent extremity of

the creation seems like the extremity of life; they who have reached it appear to feel as if death was past, and there was nothing more to do or to suffer.

“ On the eastern side of the island, the rock rising nearly an hundred perpendicular feet, is hollowed into a spacious bay: the sands are dry for a quarter of a mile up to my habitation, on a smooth ascent in its very centre: the projections of the rocks at each extremity shut out every thing from my view but the sea; I sometimes hear its waves, but their sound is deep and soothing.

“ Of what avail are my talents here—of what avail would the most splendid talents on earth be here—here is neither emulation or praise, neither admirer nor listener: if I spoke the language of my former character I could not even be understood. Death, that deprives us of the benefit of its lessons, by taking away the opportunity of their exercise, cannot give us such a lesson of self-knowledge

as this deep solitude can give. Here the soul feels the difference between her natural and artificial demands: crowds, flattery, splendour, all are gone, and I would not give a single sigh to recall them: but what should I be, if deprived of the image of Connal.

“ My mind receives that image as the smooth ocean before me—does that of the moon: nothing agitates the surface, nothing interrupts the brightness, and my heart cannot admit another sentiment, but that which penetrates all its recesses, which occupies all its energies.

“ In my solitary retreat Connal visited me every day, and the sound of his oars was the only measure of day or night. He never spoke to me of his present dangers, or future fears: the hour was devoted to passion, though the name of love was never on his lips—I saw him safe, and what had I more to ask: I was jealous of the felicity of that hour; I dreaded to disturb it by a question that might have

torn the veil his presence always threw over my imagination. I could observe on his approach the influence his fierce associates, and the daily struggles of an outlaw's life, were producing on him. When he arrived, his eye flashed, his step was a march, and his curled and thrilling lip seemed just to have uttered the sounds of command: but while he staid, he gradually softened, till even I dreaded that my influence might be opposing his destiny, and unfitting him for the struggles to which it summoned him.

“Once I exerted the remains of my talents for him, I even took some pains to arrange my long dishevelled hair, lest he should think I neglected any thing of which he was the possessor; but these efforts appeared to torture his sensibility more than the most hopeless negligence. When he heard me sing, and saw my hair arranged as it had formerly been, the tears trembled in his eyes, his voice was broken with agony: ‘Ah, God!’ he cried,

'were those tones modulated to the echoes of these barren rocks ; were those ringlets formed to stream on this rude blast ; are those songs to be wasted on the ear of a rebel !' He rushed from me, and wandered alone on the rocks till he was calm : after that evening I received him with smiles, but without effort. Passion has destroyed my ambition to please. I think too much of him to think of myself : a common attachment excites our vanity, a great one destroys it—the planet that is nearest the sun is absorbed in its light.'

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"What vicissitudes have I undergone ! my mind can scarcely comprehend, though my life has contained them, and will perhaps more. Have I ever, amid all those vicissitudes, known happiness ? Yes. I know it now. While I was surrounded by every gift of nature and fortune, I was tortured by a restless aspiration after some unknown object of felicity : now, attended by every privation,

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I feel a source of internal enjoyment springing up within my heart like a fountain of life, and giving a vernal freshness to its hopes and desires : formerly, amid luxury and pomp, life hung heavy on my spirits ; it seemed too long to me in early youth : now I dread that life will be too short, that some disaster will tear from me the opportunity of expressing a passion for which eternity seems only commensurate : the first, the noblest of human hearts is mine ; and had I been taught in my earlier days to pray, hourly would I pray that I might be worthy of him in the trials to which destiny has called him."

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"Rosine, I recall my former words ; do I talk of happiness, while his life is hourly at stake : the purer human felicity appears the more exquisite its precariousness, the greater its danger : is it a proof of the vengeance or the mercy of heaven that our happiness should be thus so woven with misery, that the alternate

shades can scarce be distinguished? I know not whether I most love or fear; yet sometimes so mingled are my emotions, that the fear is delightful, and the love a torment. Rosine, I will avow the secret that at this moment weighs on my heart: the languor that oppresses me I yield to, because I think it prevents me from penetrating into the terrors of my fate."

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"In my present awful situation, suspended between life and death, and only awaiting intelligence from Connal to know whether the hut in which I am writing is to be my prison or my grave, you may wonder that personal danger does not alone occupy my thoughts. I do not think of it—the past has been all suffering—the future is inscrutable. Why should I exhaust my remaining strength in penetrating that which human wisdom can never pierce: the future is alike inscrutable to all—to all alike it is proba-

bly pregnant with evil. A storm of misfortune may to-night blast those who are at ease in their possessions, who as little thought of evil awaiting them as the proud daughter of Lord Montelare: thus I try to harden myself, and the effort sometimes succeeds."

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"Often I think that such are his talents and virtues, that their weight will drag down the scale against a country's force and wrongs, and heaven, even by a miracle, will justify its favourite on earth: but much oftener I feel a boding, an inward and unuttered prophecy of a heart inspired by grief, that murmurs talent and virtue are in vain, and heaven has determined mankind shall receive the example of his sufferings, not his virtues."

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"This dejection which I suffer at times has nothing terrible in it: what we suffer for love always possesses a charm: the martyr of passion, like that of religion, can smile at his own sacrifice.

" I am sometimes astonished at my own serenity, and at the strength of constitution I have attained, amid habits so opposite to my former life : but why should I not be tranquil ? I have around and within me every image of peace and security. Heaven, the ocean, the moon, and the image of Connal : even death, accompanied by such images, loses his terrors ; he seems like one who promises me to conduct a wanderer to friends, from whom a mist divides her, and whom she will lose no more. Strange magic of passion, that can convert this ghastly spectre into a benignant vision ! but a soul like mine, devoured with love, regards death without consternation ; death alone can give it that promise of perfect and perennial security which life denies, and of which the want makes life more terrible than death to the souls of those who love."

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" I have wandered for hours to-night on the shore ; I who shrunk from this

climate when I visited it first. What a night ! not a ripple on the waves, not a breeze on the shore, not a cloud in the heaven. The rocks, tinted by the bright moon, rose like a wall of silver round me, and gave all the security, without the terrors, of an enchanted habitation. I traced the steps of Connal on the very spot where we wandered the night before his departure : neither of us spoke. To the world we would have appeared like two indifferent persons, but never were our hearts so full of each other. Divine and intuitive communication ! it is thus spirits perhaps converse in heaven, and passion even here can give us the image of their purity, their dignity, and their abstraction."

" I would wander still, but my companion is chilled and weary. Perhaps this strength of constitution is accorded me to meet some trial that approaches, and will demand it.

" Alas ! I have already felt the differ-

ence between cultivation and strength of mind. The former is the gift of luxury, the latter of misfortune. The former I possessed before I knew him, but the latter can only be learned in its highest elevation by being the companion of Connal. It must be midnight now by the stars. Farewel, Rosine! the daughter of Lord Montclare is retiring to her bed of rushes, happier than when silken curtains shaded her repose in palaces."

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But Armida had a source of inquietude which she had no means of making known to Rosine. Since Connal's absence, Brennan had been employed to bring provision to her retreat; and his visits had latterly become so frequent, that it was obvious this was but an excuse for them. This young man, possessing the courage of an Irishman, and manners above his rank, had still more recommended himself to Connal by advantages of education,

which none of his associates possessed. He was the nephew of a priest, who had given him all the learning that could be procured in a remote country; but his education, by extending his resources, had only increased his vices, while it enabled him to conceal them. Ambitious, bloody, and revengeful, he hated Connal, to whom he appeared devoted, and only watched for the moment when either assassination or revolt would remove the only obstruction to his assuming the command of the rebels himself.

But from the moment he beheld Armida, all his passions had been concentrated into one: and hatred for Connal, and a daring love for Armida, felt like the same sensation in his breast.

During his frequent visits, Armida felt his superiority to the men whom she had seen with Connal; she even condescended to converse with him when he spoke of Connal, and felt some

pleasure in the presence of an intelligent man who appeared attached to the object of her devotion. Once she thought as she gave him a letter for Rosine that he pressed the hand she held out to him; but her pride and her indifference made her insensible to his looks, and when he was gone the image that for ever occupied her heart left it no room to dwell on him. A few days after, as she was thanking him for some trifling attention, he suddenly seized her hand and kissed it: astonished and incensed, Armida, who ascribed this insult to intoxication, turned from him without even deigning to express her resentment. The next day, when he again visited the isle, she expected to have seen him humbled, and prepared to deprecate her anger; but on the contrary, he appeared before her without confusion, and gazed on her with looks that seemed to have derived boldness from his late offence.

He spoke frequently to the woman, and

tried every topic that he thought might extort a word from Armida; but she never opened her lips, or raised her eyes from the ground during his stay; and this silence, which would have awed a less presumptuous man, by wounding his pride, only inflamed his passions the more.

She passed most of her evenings wandering on the shore, and the beauty and calmness of that night had detained her till the moon sunk behind the rocks: she was turning to her solitary retreat, when a shadow appeared to cross her path; she started, and it retired; but the next moment advanced again, and she discovered it was Brennan. He stopt and implored her to listen to him, but the tone in which he spoke proved that he was determined not to be refused. Trembling with fear and indignation, Armida attempted to pass him, but he now actually detained her, and feeling his power too much either to defy or reproach him, she stood with averted eyes, and inflexi-

bly silent. But neither her silence nor her look now deterred Brennan from the most frantic expressions of passion, not without intimations of her desolate situation, and of Connal's absence.

Conscious that this was too true, Armida struggled with her pride, anger, and disgust, and though almost convulsed with the effort, she attempted to speak to him, but the swelling of her proud heart denied her utterance, and again she tried to break from him in silence.

"I see my presence is horrible to you," said Brennan, indignantly, without retiring.

"The presence of a friend of O'Morven ought to have no terror for me," said Armida, forcing herself to speak, though her flesh quivered with rage and horror at the thought of such a parley. But all her feelings were lost in terror, when Brennan, stamping with the fury and imprecations of a demon, swore he was Connal's bitter and eternal enemy. Terrified at this menace, she humbled herself even to intreat him to be calm.

"Tell me not of calmness," cried the unhappy wretch, "can a madman be calm? can one who has suspended life, reason, every thing on a single trial, be calm while the cause is pleading? I love, I am guilty, I am frantic, do not exasperate me, do not plunge me deeper in crimes; you will destroy us both; smile on me, utter one kind word, and you will save me from perdition."

"Wretch!" cried Armida, unable to repress her passion, "go offer to your mates the passion with which you dare to prophane the ear of the daughter of Lord Montclare."

"Ah! ah! ah!" cried Brennan, bursting into a horrid laugh; and retreating to some distance, he viewed her with the most savage contempt—"The daughter of Lord Montclare! Are you in your father's castle again, with all the world at your feet flattering you? Brennan was a poor labourer then, that hardly dared to raise his eyes to you as you passed; yet even then I dared to love you, and

now I dare to tell you so: What should hinder me? What are you now? the wandering companion of a rebel, a vagabond, a felon. The wretched women that follow the band are not so fallen as you, for they follow husbands and children from duty; you followed a stranger from passion: and is it you that frown on me; you, whose character is gone, who have renounced society, forsaken your friends, forfeited your rank? Your proud father, if he could speak from his grave, would disclaim you; you would be abandoned alike by the living and the dead."

"Oh, Connal! Connal!" cried Armida, while the burning tears of passion, in spite of all her pride, burst forth, "what can you give to compensate for this moment?" The wretched victim of his passions beheld her tears, and disarmed, in a moment he knelt at her feet, implored her pardon, wept with the passion of a child, but still mingled a kind of im-

passioned ferocity with his humiliation that proved the violence and mutability of his agitated character. Armida, unable to speak, indignantly waved him to begone. Brennan rose from his knees, and slowly and sullenly retired.

"You give me no hope then," said he, in a hollow voice: "you renounce me, you force me to — oh, God, what will you make me! Take care, for God's sake, for your own sake, I implore you for the last time: you do not know what you are doing."

"Begone!" replied Armida, "death can have no sufferings like this degradation."

"Do you know whom you tempt?" said he, advancing, and furiously grasping her arm: "do you know whom you tempt?—a devil, a very devil, one who would rather bear you to hell with him than see you in heaven with O'Morven."

"Ah, wretch!" cried Armida, shrieking with horror, "release me, and cease

your horrible imprecations." But her terror only increased his fury, and kneeling on the ground, he poured out the most dreadful curses against Connal, and against himself, if he failed in his purposes of vengeance against him.

"Oh!" said Armida, whose courage rose at his very name: "oh! that he were near you, those words would be your last."

Brennan started from the ground at this threat, and the pride of conscious courage, exalted by his passions, gave his figure for a moment an air of diabolical greatness.

"And do you think," he cried, "I do not know my danger? Oh! I know it all. The man that injures O'Morven has no hope of life, but the man who has been spurned by you has no wish to live."

He then rushed from her, and Armida, though almost frantic with terror, tried to reach her habitation; but a moment after she saw him pursuing her. He did

not approach near, but she could distinguish his menacing attitude, as he cried—

“ I do not mean to terrify you, but if you should hear ——” Armida, afraid to provoke him by flight, stood, and then coming close to her, he repeated, “ if you should hear ——” He shook his hand, his voice was choaked, and the horrid grin with which he gazed at her, and the struggle of forced derision, with the most agonizing passions, made Armida tremble, as if she beheld a fiend. Even after he left her, so disturbed were her faculties, that several times she sought in vain for the entrance to her retreat, and when at length she reached it, she resigned all thoughts of retiring to rest, and prevailed on her attendant to sit up with her till morning.

Brennan did not appear the next, or six following days: her spirits gradually became tranquil, and though she never ventured to wander alone on the shore after that dreaded evening, its scene only

appeared to her imagination like a horrible dream. At length, oppressed by this solitude, she turned to her companion for relief. The memory of this woman, like all the Irish, was stored with tales of superstition; and their effect, combined with the scenery around her, interested Armida's imagination, and once that she was in a mood to hear "Sad stories chanced in the times of old," she inquired of Connal's grandfather, who she understood accompanied the rebels in their march, but whom she had never seen either on the mountain or in the isles.

"And well for you, my lady, you did not," said the woman, "for he hates you mortally, and would be the death of you, if ever you met."

"Hates me! would be the death of me!" cried Armida, astonished at the beings with whom she had become conversant.

"Oh, yes, my lady, as mad as he is

he knows that O'Morven is in love with the daughter of Lord Montclare, and he thinks that all his misfortunes are owing to your family, and in his rage he sometimes thinks that if he could shed your blood, all the charm would be broken, and he would be restored to his rights again; and it was all O'Morven could do to keep him from you on the mountain; and on that dreadful march where so many perished he was running about with a naked sword in quest of you, and thought, if he could reach you, the day was our's."

"Is he deranged, then?" said Armida, with horror at the danger to which she had been unconsciously exposed.

"Oh, yes, my lady, ever since the night his tower was burned: what with hardship, and grief, and wandering, his senses are quite gone, and he thinks nothing but the life of one of your family could restore him to his reason. And sometimes he takes you for Queen Eli-

zabeth, who he says was the first cause of the Protestant heresy, and says you came over from Italy to invade his country, and take his lands and castle from him; for he mixes up things so in his madness: and sometimes he will wander about at night, crying to them to bring him back to his castle, or to tell him who took away his understanding from him, that it would break your heart. Many a time I have heard him till myself has been as mad as him almost, listening to him. Sometimes for quietness they will let him go where he likes, and then he will run as fast as ever he can totter, thinking he will reach his castle again: then he falls down quite spent, and says it goes from him faster than he can follow."

"Ah, Connal, how many trials you have," said Armida, sadly.

"Christ save us! What's that!" said the woman, starting: they were both silent. "Did not you hear a noise, my

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H

lady?" she repeated, lifting her pale face to Armida.

"I thought I did," said Armida, sickening with her fears.

They listened again, and could distinctly hear footsteps retiring from the door of the cottage. For nearly an hour they did not venture to speak, watching for its repetition: it did not return, and they were beginning to recover their fears, when a human groan, distant but audible, burst on their ears. Half dead with terror and superstition, the woman declared her belief that old O'Morven was dead, and his spirit was come to visit them for having spoken of him.

"I fear the living more than the dead," said Armida.

Again their terror was mocked by another interval, and Armida, recollecting their visionary conversation, was willing to ascribe the noises they had heard to imagination strongly excited; but while

she tried to encourage her companion in this belief, a shriek from the latter made her turn suddenly, and she beheld Brennan, who had entered unheard by either. He was standing behind the table on which Armida leant: the wretched lights that burned on it scarcely showed his figure. His arms were folded, his hat drawn over his eyes; but what could be seen of his countenance was agitated and dark. He neither spoke, nor raised his eyes to them, till the woman exclaimed:

“What brings you here at this hour?”

“I am come for your lady,” said Brennan, without looking at her.

“For me?” repeated Armida.

“Yes, madam; O’Morven has returned: he is at the other side of the isle waiting for you in a boat, and sent me to bring you to him.”

“I don’t believe a word of it,” said the woman; “don’t go with him, my lady, he comes for no good at this hour.”

“She must go with me,” said Brennan.

"She shall not," said the woman, her courage rising with her fears.

Brennan, with an oath, and a look of fury, bid her hold her tongue.

"I won't hold my tongue; there's villainy going on. Don't be afraid, my lady," she continued, turning to Armida, who, pale as death, tried in vain to speak to either of them: "if O'Morven be here, why didn't he come for her himself?"

Brennan was silent for some time, and then he said the tide was rough on the shore, and the boat could only be rowed to the other side of the island.

"And why could not he leave the boat there, and come to her himself?"

With another execration, Brennan told her his business was not with her, and again urged Armida to come with him.

"If she goes with you, so will I every step of the way," said the woman, resolutely.

Brennan, provoked to the utmost, look-

ed as if he would fell her to the earth, and Armida, trembling lest she should witness some outrage, rushed between them, declaring she was ready to go.

“ You may go, or stay, as you please,” said Brennan, sullenly; “ but you must determine soon, for O’Morven is waiting, and I dare delay no longer.”

“ And I’ll go with her, be it where it will,” said the woman: “ I’ll not be trusting to the like of you for a guide at this hour.”

Armida by signs intreated her not to provoke him further, but the poor creature was so agitated by her fears, that when she attempted to go with them, she screamed out that she saw the devil behind Brennan, and clung to Armida in an agony of horror.

“ Will you stay to listen to this mad-woman, or come to O’Morven?” said Brennan.

Armida tried to pacify her, for she wished for her presence, but in vain.

She was now as resolute not to go as she was before to go, and Armida was compelled to leave the cottage with Brennan only. He walked on rapidly without speaking, and when she inquired about Connal, returned such incoherent answers, that she ceased to question him. They ascended the rocks, which rose behind Armida's habitation, by a winding path: the moon shone in full glory on the wide heath before them, and they traversed it with such speed that Armida was compelled to pause for breath.

Brennan waited for her with impatience at some distance, and the deep sighs he heaved appeared to proceed from emotion rather than fatigue. When they proceeded, the path suddenly descended into a glen, so dark, rugged, and narrow, that Armida was compelled to hold his arm for safety; but this appeal to his protection did not appear to move him. He supported her, but he did not speak, nor did the hand he extended to her

tremble. As the path sunk deeper, and the glen grew darker, Armida cast her eyes for a moment on the rocks, whose summits were yet tinged by the moon: it sunk behind them, and she felt as if she had beheld it for the last time.

When they were in complete darkness, Brennan began to speak, but the sound of his voice had something in it so strange and terrifying, that Armida wished she could either observe his expression, or compel his silence.

"This is a dismal place," said he. There was no answer, and he continued—"A place that men seem to have agreed was fit for crimes, and to make as horrible to the imagination as it is to the senses."

"Are we far from where O'Morven is?" said Armida.

"Not very far," replied Brennan; "but we have many a dreary spot to traverse first."

"Then let us make no delay," said Armida, already panting for breath from fatigue.

Brennan stopped. "Here," said he, "a holy man was murdered—a man who had lived here in solitude and sanctity for half a century: he lived in a cave in this glen, and some villains, who were smugglers on the coast, murdered him, lest he should betray them. But he had no passions, no crimes," he added, after a long pause; "he was fit to die."

Armida pressed on with so much speed that she hardly heard him, till he stopped her again.

"Have you no chill, no shudder," he cried, "passing this spot? Here a mother murdered her child—her natural child! She came to do penance amid this wild place for her offence, and she lost her reason, it was believed. Her child was found dead here, and she was tearing up the ground with her hands for a

grave. When they asked her for whom it was, she laughed, and said, it was for her child."

"Cease, cease those horrible details," said Armida; "at this hour, and in such a place, they are too much for me."

"Do you deprecate murder, and mischief, and horror then, gentle lady?" said Brennan, in a voice of artificial softness: "why do you cause it then? Why do you?" he repeated, bending over, and almost whispering in that low, constrained, horrible voice, that tries to blend irony with an expression of the fiercest malignity.

"Lead me to O'Morven," said Armida, trying in vain to speak with resolution, "or lead me back again."

"Not so fast, fair lady; we are not through the glen yet; we must pass the ruined hut where a son murdered his own father: it has been deserted ever since, except by the damned spirits that howl there at midnight. Shall we join them?"

My voice is tuned for such a song: I am not fit to talk of love in a lady's ear."

Armida, finding expostulation vain, and dreading to urge him to frenzy, forbore to speak, and tremblingly pursued her way, while his passion appeared to spend itself in execrations. At length the way became so rugged, he was almost compelled to carry her; but only anxious to end this dismal journey, she submitted to any thing that would expedite it, but when he had lifted her across a small brook, he stopped again, and pointing to it—

"Look at that spot," he cried; "mark it well. I told you this place was marked for murder: it is enough to stir bad thoughts in the heart. Why did you come here? In that very stream, shallow as it looks, a man drowned a woman that refused him: he could not live without her, and he determined she should not live without him. Aye, look at it well: there was the very spot where her swollen

corse was found. She was fair in her life-time, but how did she look then—as white as you do now,” and he held her towards the water.

She was now convinced that her death was certain, and sinking on her knees, she attempted to plead for life.

“What is it you fear?” said Brennan: “Have you ever done me an injury? Have you ever spurned me when I knelt to you? Oh! never, never.” And he laughed with the wildness of a demon. Then checking himself, with a convulsive effort, he snatched her from the ground: his voice suddenly changed to a tone of calm decision—“Your journey is ended,” he cried. “O’Morven is in yonder cave,” and he led her towards something like a chasm in the rock, from which the stream they had crossed was dashing.

Her faculties were benumbed, and staggering with horror, she followed him towards the entrance: the passage was totally dark, and as he drew her on, he

perceived, by the weight that sunk into his arms, she was insensible. When her reason returned, she perceived she was in a cavern. A fire burning on the ground filled it with so thick a smoke that at first she could not distinguish any thing. At length, by the light of a wretched taper that twinkled in a kind of niche, she discovered a heap of straw and rushes spread beneath it, on which something lay extended. Brennan stood beside it, appearing to watch what lay there, and he had placed Armida on the ground, as if careless of her recovery or life. There was not a word spoken, and Armida, scarcely conscious where she was, had no power to break the silence.

At length a rustling was heard in the straw, and the figure of an aged man, ghastly and gigantic, slowly raised itself from the ground. He addressed some words to Brennan in Irish, and there was a kind of energy and grandeur in his very debility, that made Armida, in spite

of her disturbed faculties, feel she was in the presence of the grandfather of Connal. They conversed in Irish for some time, till Brennan, determined to make her feel all the horrors of her situation, said aloud in English: "I have brought your enemy: she is in your hands, and if she escapes, the fortunes of your house are fallen for ever."

The old man turned to Armida. As he viewed her his eyes blazed with madness, and their fiery and delirious brightness, contrasted with the ashy paleness of his face and his emaciated features, almost gave the idea of demoniac possession inflating and agitating a dead body.

"Traitress!" he exclaimed, though speaking English with difficulty; "traitress! you are in my power at last: you shall at last feel it. I know you well, though you assume that appearance of youth and beauty to deceive me. You are the Queen of England: the false daughter of the heretic Henry. You have dispossess-

ed me of my rightful dominion :—I am a prince, as you are, though I am chained down in this cave. See the fetters with which you have loaded me," he cried, tearing up handfuls of the straw on which he lay : "I lie here in misery and famine, while you and your father revel in my castle : but now I will have my revenge. Why did you ever injure me?" he continued, gazing on her. "You might have left me to rule in my barren isles. I had a grandson too, a brave youth : he died defending me ; but your father shall not boast, while O'Morven goes childless to his grave."

Armida, during the ravings, remembered the story of his derangement, which she had heard that night, and now saw that the purpose for which Brennan had forced her there was death aggravated by the horrors of perishing under the hands of a lunatic.

She cast an imploring look on Brennan ; but darting at her a glance of

deadly malignity, he again addressed O'Morven in Irish, and seemed to stimulate his exhausted passions to revenge.

The wretched maniac started up, and with the mingled impotence and fury of madness, he tore the straw from his bed, dashed it at Armida, grinned with horrible fury, and then fell back exhausted, with an idiot laugh.

Brennan, then provoked to more than the frenzy of madness, caught Armida in his arms, and dragged her towards him. She neither shrieked nor struggled, but sinking from his arms, she raised her eyes to him with an expression that might have disarmed the fury of a savage; but his heart was adamant: he knew he had hazarded too much to escape from Connal's vengeance, and his only wish was that his victim should perish amid horrors that would satisfy his vindictive heart for the disdain with which she had treated him.

Twice the old man, grasping the bay-

onet which Brennan forced into his hand, aimed it at Armida's breast : with the rage of a monster he then attempted to tear off the thin covering of her bosom. Wresting at the same moment the weapon from the trembling hand of the maniac, Armida pleaded no longer for life ; she implored only to perish in Connal's presence.

At that moment a blow, as if from the arm of a giant, struck Brennan to the earth.

Armida, almost doubtful of life, turned and felt herself clasped in the arms of Connal. She would have inquired, she would have knelt, she would have clung to him ; but there was no time for it now, for, shaking her off, he was compelled to meet Brennan, who had started from the ground, and rushed on him with the bayonet in his hand.

A momentary trance fell on Armida ; but she immediately revived to all the terrors of their rencounter.

Connal had wrested the bayonet from him, and they then closed in mortal struggle.

Armida had lately seen many sights of horror, but nothing ever like this, where all the passions and strength of the combatants were strained to the utmost point in this tug for life. Their hands fastened in each other's throats; their nostrils spouting blood, from the force of their gripe; their eyes starting from their sockets with the fierceness of their struggle: they groaned, they panted, they rocked, they writhed: the ground was indented with the stamping of their feet: the fire was trampled out by their attempts to drag each other into it.

Brennan fought with almost supernatural rage and strength; but the strength of Connal, though almost exhausted by recent toil and fatigue, was far more than his; and after remaining limb locked in limb, and their heads buried in each other's bosoms, Connal suddenly extri-

cated himself from this dreadful embrace, and collecting all his strength for the recoil, dashed his adversary on the ground. The cavern groaned with the shock, and Brennan lay speechless.

Panting from his toil, a faint smile breaking through his sickening and distracted features, Connal then turned to Armida, and when he reached her, he was compelled to throw his harassed frame on the ground beside her.

She was pale and silent : he spoke to her, but she did not know him : he folded her in his arms, but she was insensible of the pressure. As he still hung over her with assurances of safety, he perceived her bosom was stained with the blood that issued from his own, and he then for the first time felt the wounds he had received from the bayonet before he could force it from Brennan.

Dreading that his presence in this state was the cause of her terror, he rose and went in search of water to wash the

blood away: but at the least motion he made to quit her, she gave a piercing scream, and clung to him, though she shewed no sensibility of his presence when he stayed.

Bewildered, faint, and sick, he again threw himself beside her, and watched her countenance for a gleam of reason. Her eyes wildly traversed the cave, as if in pursuit of some invisible object: at length they rested on Breannan, who lay apparently lifeless; and her looks suddenly became fixed, as if by fascination, to that object. Connal observed him too, though without any apprehension that he could be formidable in that state. At length he uttered a faint moan, and his limbs quivered with a convulsive motion. Connal believed the last struggles were approaching, and he spread his arm before Armida, to save her from the sight; but she still continued to gaze on him with that intenseness with which we would

view a tiger crouching in the act to spring on us.

The dying wretch dragged himself along the ground for a few inches like a worm, and appeared to be catching at something he could not reach.

Connal attempted to rise; but Armida's screams again detained him, and he was compelled to watch this frightful scene in silence.

Brennan still continued to crawl along: one arm was broken by his fall, and he could only move on the other side. He felt with one hand about the ground, and so fixed was his purpose, that when he laid hold of one of the burning brands, he felt its flaming point with his hand before he could relinquish it, for his sight was gone.

Connal, unable to endure this sight, approached him to see if life could be preserved, or would soon be extinguished; but before he reached him, the desperate

creature had got hold of the bayonet, and as Connal bent over him, he pointed it towards him, as a dying scorpion darts out its sting. Connal retreated, and Brennan, with a shriek of torture, plunged it into his own heart.

The cry of the maniac, who had remained insensible during the conflict, but who now started from his bed, mingled with Brennan's dying groan, was too horrible, and Connal collected his remaining strength to bear Armida from the cave, and when he had reached the entrance, perceived the men who attended him, but whom he had far outstripped, hastening to his assistance.

CHAP. IV.

Yes—I do think that you might pardon him,
And neither heaven or man grieve at the mercy.

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN Connal formed the desperate project of seeking safety among his enemies, he felt it necessary to provide for his personal security by a disguise, as he had to traverse the whole of Connaught from west to east, before he could reach the borders of Leinster, on his progress to Dublin. He assumed the dress of an Irish peasant to conceal his remarkable figure; and in the great rug coat and slouched hat, the proud form of the rebel chief was distinguished only in stature and motion from the meanest of his countrymen: but unpractised in dissimulation, he betrayed an inconsistency that might have exposed him in the noble animal on which he was mounted, and

the proud grace and skill with which he managed him. On the evening of the first day he reached Eyrecourt: he had been all day without food, and afraid to approach the town, he lingered in the neighbourhood until it was dark, and then drew near to a cluster of cabins, indifferent to the hard fare and miserable beds they promised: in the first he entered a corse lay on the bed, and a number of peasants, as usual at a wake, were singing, drinking, and dancing in the cottage, regardless of the despair of the widow, or her children, who were weeping round her, conscious that their last farthing had been expended in doing honour to his remains by riot and drunkenness. Shocked at this scene, which he had too often witnessed, Connal turned to a cabin at some distance: he knocked at the door, and asked if a traveller and his horse could be accommodated for the night.

"Come in," said an elderly man, who

was sitting over the embers of a turf fire, his hands locked in each other: he did not rise when Connal entered, nor utter a word of welcome in answer to his graceful salutation: he pointed to a bench, and after gazing for a moment on Connal's figure, which, even reclining, spread across their narrow hearth, relapsed into his former posture: opposite to him was an elderly woman: her apron was thrown over her face, but her loud sobs spoke an agonizing heart.

Connal, weary, drenched with rain, and without food all day, felt himself more chilled by this reception than by all his privations: there was nothing of the cordiality, the open and friendly glow of kindness that communicates its warmth to the meanest stranger that enters an Irish cabin.

"That is a hard seat," said the man after a long silence, "but we have no better to offer you."

"I have had no better for many

months," said Connal, "and never wished for it."

"It must be your bed too," said the man, "if you lie here: we have had no bed since yesterday."

"I am sorry for it, for your sake," said Connal; "at my age, the ground is a bed soft enough."

The man looked at him closely, as if he was contrasting the language of poverty with the voice and look of the man who uttered it, but could find no connexion between them.

The humble sweetness of Connal's voice, combined with his lofty figure, seemed first to perplex, and then to interest him; and at length he said to his wife, "Is not there a potatoe left in the house to give the gentleman?"

"No, we have not had one since yesterday you know," said the woman.

"Good heaven," cried Connal, starting from his seat, "what is the cause of

this distress? have I increased it, can I relieve it?"

"No, God only can relieve us," said the man.

"May he relieve you then!" said Connal, fervently; "but far be it from a stranger like me to intrude on you—I will be gone."

"No, do not go," said the woman; "I love to look at you: he was not so tall or so strong as you: now that I look at you, he was nothing like you at all, but still the sight of you puts me in mind of him," and she again wept bitterly. Connal knew not how to console her, and he stood irresolutely.

"Are you from Galway?" said the man.

"I am," answered Connal.

"Do you hear any thing of the rebels there?" said the man in a broken voice.

"Oh! do not ask, do not ask him," cried his wife; "my heart will not bear it, my heart will break if I hear my boy is in danger."

"This poor woman and I had a son," said the man: "we were in a good way, and had land near Galway, under Lord Montclare, if you knew him, he that had the beautiful daughter that ran off after O'Morven the rebel: oh! my heavy curse, and the curse of my heart-broken wife there, and the curse of my whole seed and breed be on him for a rebel, as he is. We were doing well, and though the boy was idle now and then, he was fond of his mother and me, and we thought of nothing but ending our days in the same cabin with him and his, when the rebellion broke out, and nothing would serve him but he must go after O'Morven. Oh, Tim, Tim, that was not the way your mother and I brought you up, to roam about with robbers and rebels, and come to the gallows at last: and so when I found he was gone, I did not care to stay where every one was telling me of my child's shame, and if he ever came to be hung in my sight, I thought that my

grief would make me wicked, and fly in the face of God, and never see him in this world or the next; and so, though no one ever gave me trouble or searched the house, or took me up, I went away from the place for good and all; but I could not go far from him neither, and so I came and took ground here; but somehow, though every thing went right with me before, every thing goes wrong since my trouble came on me: I have no heart to work; my hand is out if I try to do any thing; the place about me is cursed I think; so I fell from one distress to another, this poor woman and I, and yesterday our bed was sold, and to-day something else, and I do not care what goes next. I would not care if they would take and throw me into the river there, for I have such a sickness at my heart, that I could not hinder a child from killing me if it would."

"Stop, Jem, stop," said the woman, "do not trouble the gentleman any more;

see how he hides his face—he cannot help us, and we need not trouble him with our grief.”

Connal started from his seat; he dragged his dishevelled hair over his eyes to hide the bursting tear: “No, no,” he cried, pacing the cabin with agitated steps, “go on—if there be any thing more bitter, more piercing, tell it all: I deserve—I deserve it.”

The man and his wife exchanged looks as if they believed their guest deranged: “What is it disturbs you, young man,” said the woman, “what are you thinking of?”

“I am thinking what a heart O’Morven has to-night,” said Connal.

“Oh, never name him!” cried the man, who believed that the stranger like himself had been a sufferer by the disturbances: “never name him—God’s curse light on him and his for ever and ever.”

“Oh, do not curse him!” cried Connal; “a broken-hearted father’s curse is

heavy, and he is so wretched, he needs no malediction to make him more so."

"Aye, so they say," said the man, hardly comprehending him, but terrified by the wildness of his looks; "they say he was forced to what he did, but it is all the same to us, and those he ruins."

"But do not curse him," repeated Connal, "do not, good man: say you forgive him: say so, I implore you."

"Well, God forgive him, and bless him too," said the man, "I do not care, I have not the heart to hate any one, or to curse any one; I have not strength for it, for neither I nor my poor woman have tasted food to-day."

Connal eagerly produced the scanty sum he had reserved for his travelling expences, and desired the man to buy some food: he went out, and returned speedily with provisions, but sick with famine and grief, neither he nor his wife could swallow a morsel, until Connal's vehement solicitations reminding them of

the attentions of their lost child, they sat down to eat, and pressed Connal to join them.

"I thank you, I feel no want of food," said Connal.

They redoubled their importunities.

"By heaven, I will not touch a morsel under your roof."

"You look pale," said the woman; "I believe you have not tasted food to-day more than ourselves."

"No, nor cannot now," said Connal.

"Do, do, take a morsel," said both of them rising: "if it was O'Morven himself we could not see him fasting under our roof."

"And if it was," said Connal, gently waving them from him, "he would be a villain if he complied."

"Ah!" said the woman, "it is easy to see you are not what you seem—the dirt and wretchedness of creatures like us is not fit for you—those limbs of your's

have been used to a softer bed than we can give you."

"I desire no better than the floor of this cabin," said Connal, "if you will allow me to stretch myself on it."

"Allow you!" cried the woman, delighted at the plenty he poured on them, "aye, and think ourselves blessed with such a creature under our roof."

"Cease, cease; you know not what you say," said Connal: "I am no blessing to any roof;" and then recollecting the danger to which this unguarded language exposed him, he stopt.

"Ah! you are too mild, too heavenly looking, to have any thing to do with this bloody business," she exclaimed: "would to heaven that O'Morven had a heart like you—I see it in your eyes," she cried: "you never were the death of a human creature—you never seduced a child from his parents to ruin him."

"God bless—God bless you! torture me no more," cried Connal, "I am

weary, I cannot speak to you as I ought: if I have said any thing to offend you, forgive me, and let me rest."

The poor people, grateful for his bounty, would now have given up their wooden seat for his accommodation, but he declined any bed but the floor, and stretching himself on it, appeared to sleep that he might escape their importunity.

"Ah!" said the poor woman, "our's are not the only heavy hearts that O'Morven has caused to-night."

"True, true," murmured Connal, "he has a thousand crimes, and but one life to offer for them all—would that the atonement was offered!"

His host was soon asleep, but Connal could not close his eyes. Determined not to quit the place without making some reparation to these unhappy parents, he in vain racked his thoughts for what fortune had denied him: the little money he had was already expended on them: nothing remained but to dispose of his

horse, and this, though by delaying his journey, probably exposed his life, he resolved on. Some regret for losing this noble animal who had so often borne him through danger lingered in his heart, but he said, mentally, "Let me be grateful to Heaven, that amid the thousands involved in my ruin it is in my power to relieve one at least."

Before day-light he arose, and gnawed by hunger, saw with the keenest appetite the remains of the meal he had purchased for them the night before ; but determined to furnish sooner than eat the bread of those he had injured, he left it untouched, and having fed his horse, rode out in quest of a purchaser. At some distance he met a man, to whom he offered him.

"That horse is above my price," said the man, "but at that house yonder you'll be apt to get your money for him. 'Squire Shaughnessy does not care what price he gives for a horse."

Connal rode towards the house, and as

he approached the gate saw the piers were covered with proclamations offering a reward for his apprehension. He hesitated for a moment, but on reading the description of his person, and glancing a look at his disguise, he believed he was sufficiently safe, and recollected that as he had been seen in the road, a precipitate retreat might expose him to suspicion. He entered the gate as one of the grooms was galloping down the avenue: he stopt.

“Young man, what do you value that horse at?”

“I am come with an intention to sell him to your master,” said Connal, “but I have not yet fixed on his price.”

“I’ll tell you what it is,” said the fellow, familiarly: “sell him to me, and I’ll give you a handsome price, and something to drink besides.”

Connal smiled, and declined his offer.

“You are devilish high,” said the groom: “what, I suppose you are above

taking any thing in the morning, are you?"

"God knows, no one wants it more," said Connal, wiping the cold dew from his forehead, "but I do not drink in the morning, friend."

The man renewed his offer.

"I can easily see, my friend," said Connal, "that you wish to purchase this horse to sell him at an advanced price to your master, or some one else, but as I am the owner of the animal, I intend to have the benefit of the sale myself."

"You the owner," said the groom; "a likely story indeed, that a fellow like you should have such a horse; I am sure you stole him."

Connal's arm trembled to strike the fellow to the ground, but determined not to quarrel, he calmly rode on. The groom placed himself in his way.

"You can't see my master," said he; "he is not used to speak to such vaga-

bonds as you ; I suppose you are come from the rebels in the mountains."

"My good friend," said Connal, coolly, "let me advise you to be gone ; as weak as I am, I could pitch you over that wall with one arm. I have no mind to quarrel, but if you force me to correct your insolence, the consequence will be more unpleasant to you than me."

The man made no answer but by aiming a blow at Connal with his whip.

Connal threw himself off his horse, and seizing the fellow with one arm, flung him to a distance, at which he lay breathless, and then mounting again, rode to the house.

He had scarce declared his business, when the groom followed with loud complaints, and being a favoured servant soon obtained access to his master, after darting a look of fury at Connal as he passed him in the hall.

The 'squire came out with rage in his

countenance: "What is this you have dared to do to my servant?"

"What I would do again," said Connal, "if he gave the same provocation."

"Do you know, fellow, I am a magistrate, and can commit you for this offence?"

"I do not know that you could, and I am sure you ought not," said Connal, "when you hear that I bore from him more than ever I bore from man, and in punishing him only defended myself."

"Please your honour," said the man, "he came behind me and knocked me down without my ever saying a word to him: but if I had you out of his honour's presence I'd make you remember me as long as you lived."

"You!" said Connal, his spirit rising at this menial insolence. "Oh! it would be but pastime to me to deal with you and all your fellows at once: come on, the strongest of you, come all together, and weak

with weariness and want as I am, I'll toss you as boys do marbles."

The men retreated, but the master came forward.

"You are an extraordinary man," said he, viewing him with surprise, "to come into my house, and brave me and my servants in this manner."

"I do not want to contend with you or any man," said Connal, vexed at this interruption: "I came to know if you would purchase a horse from me, a noble animal, that I cannot afford to keep: your servant met me; he was insolent, and I punished him; unprovoked, I would not injure a worm, and even now I had rather I had borne that fellow's rudeness than stand like a public Gladiator in your hall, displaying my strength on your menials."

The gentleman observed him still more closely, and then desired to see the horse. He was struck with its beauty, and Connal at his request mounted; and, attached

to his horse, and conscious that this was the last time he ever would employ this faithful servant, he displayed his strength, grace, and fleetness with a pride that made the spectators exclaim, "He alone is fit to possess such an animal."

As he dismounted, glowing with exercise, but breathless with fatigue, the eye of the master was rivetted on him, and he said, with apparent negligence, "You are a good active rider; I have no objection to take you as my groom."

The colour deepened on Connal's cheek, but a moment restored his self-possession, and he said, "I wish—yes, I wish to heaven I were your groom, or the meanest labourer on your grounds—but I cannot——."

The other paused, and then fixing his eyes on him, said, sternly, "I make no doubt you have stolen that horse; I shall apprehend and confine you till you can produce satisfactory evidence to your character."

"You shall kill me first," said Connal, almost ready to betray himself: "I have been insulted, but I will not be injured. I know the laws of my country, and he that advances but a step to deprive me of my liberty holds his life cheap."

The other smiled, and beckoned him to a distance: "I know you," he whispered: "I tried you, and have found out who you are; go, begone—don't mention your name to me: I am a magistrate, and must do my duty if I am compelled. Here is the value of your horse; do not employ it against your country: leave this place. You are a brave man, and I pity you."

"Generous man!" murmured Connal, "I may live to thank you." He gave one look and one sigh as his faithful horse was led away to his new master, and then hurried to the cottage with his prize.

The old man was still asleep; his wife had gone out. Connal seized the opportunity of enclosing the money in a

scrap of paper he found in the cabin, in the inside of which he scrawled with a wretched pen, "Pray for O'Morven: he never wished to injure mortal: if his persuasions can restore your son to you again, you shall see him soon; till then he never shall handle a pike, or load a musket for me." He then hastily partook of the fragments of their humble meal, and depositing the money under the old man's head, quitted Eyrecourt on foot.

Apprised by his late adventure of his danger, he avoided the high road, but pursued his way with such expedition that he reached Tullamore that night. It was late; he dreaded to ask admittance at a cottage: he had no money to procure it elsewhere. "This then," said he, throwing himself on the bank of the canal, and leaning his head against one of the posts round which the ropes are coiled, "this then must be my pillow to-night; but my poor host will be able

to purchase the bed for himself and his aged wife they wanted last night. I wish I could look in on them through their cabin roof this moment. I dare not enter their door: the unfortunate are compelled to shrink from the good they do as they would from a crime."

A person who belonged to the packet-boat noticing him, came up: "Do you want accommodation for the night, young man?" said he.

"I do indeed," said Connal, with an involuntary sigh.

"I can shew you the way to the hotel," said the man.

"I have no money," said Connal, after a short pause.

The man shrunk back from him: "And what brings you here then?" said he.

"If you can show me any place I can occupy with less offence I am ready to remove to it," said Connal.

The man went away, and after loitering for some time, come back with a sus-

picious look: "But I see you keep near the luggage-boats," said he.

"And what then?" replied Connal, looking at him with amazement.

"Why only that if you have no dishonest intentions," said the man, moving to a distance, "that you may as well move to another place, that's all."

Connal started up: this last insult was too much for him: the man in some terror retreated. Connal could have easily overtaken him, but anger with him was the hectic of a moment. "Merciful Heaven!" he cried, "is there some crime branded in my face, that every where I meet with insult and suspicion? yes, I feel there is: all eyes can read the crime of poverty, nor is there one that makes man shrink from man so soon." The sight of this man suggested to him that the canal boat was the swiftest and safest conveyance to Dublin, as he would be exposed only to the passengers, whose number must be less than that of the

persons he might meet on the road. He inquired therefore for the boat that was next to sail, and introducing himself to the captain, asked if he would be permitted to work for his passage.

"It is not the custom," said the captain, "but if you will attend the passengers after they have dined——"

"I will undertake no menial office," said Connal, retiring: "if you have any employment for me on the deck, you will find me capable of it."

"You seem a strong able fellow," said the captain: "I don't care if I let you come, but you must not refuse to do what you are asked."

"I have already told you what I will or will not do," said Connal: "if I refuse it is not my fault, but your's:" and he returned to his cold bed on the bank till the boat sailed at four in the morning.

This was the most intolerable part of his whole journey: the dignity of his figure at first impressed his associates

with a degree of awe that made them shrink from him ; but in a short time his mildness, his humility, and the readiness with which he undertook even the meanest tasks, encouraged them to treat him with a familiarity, which, though he retreated from, he could not repel. At length, sinking into a corner of the deck, he quietly plied his humble task, and smiled occasionally at the terrifying tales repeated by the passengers, who were talking to each other of the rebel chief O'Morven.

“ How much easier is it,” thought Connal, “ to be the hero of a moment, to wind up the heart to its utmost pitch of suffering and of strength, and bid it rest, than to wear life away in these petty struggles, that corrode the strength as the Alps were mined away by vinegar, and leave us without consolation or dignity.”

He was startled by the sound of the bell that announced the arrival of the

boat at the harbour of Portobello, and he saw the spires of Dublin for the first time rising to his view. The bank was crowded with the relations and friends of the passengers, who all hurried on deck. On every side Connal heard the exclamations of joy and the tumult of meeting. He descended alone: no voice greeted him, no hand was extended to welcome him: he was thrust aside by the haste of friends to meet each other: carriage after carriage rolled away with their happy burdens, and he was left alone at the entrance of a city where he knew neither a street nor an individual. There was one person in Dublin to whom he was recommended, but whom he had never seen, and starting at length from his melancholy reverie, he inquired of the first person that passed him the way to Francis-street. The person unluckily was one who imagined there was humour in deceiving a stranger, and Connal wandered about in pursuit of the direction

till he arrived in a part of Dublin where the way to Francis-street was almost unknown. As he crossed Dame-street to Fownes-street, he was suddenly involved in a crowd of whom so many were females, that he could not extricate himself without an effort of strength he would not employ, and delicately attentive to women, he assisted and protected those who were near him, till he found himself involuntarily drawn into the theatre.

He now attempted to return, but a well-dressed female, who was separated from her party, intreated his protection with so much earnestness that he could not withdraw it, and the next moment the rush of the crowd forced them both into the box-lobby. Disturbed and alarmed at the publicity of this situation, Connal could not desert his terrified companion, and at her solicitation he accompanied her to the box, where she waited till her party could join her. In the crowd and tumult she had hardly till

now beheld her protector; and her amazement when the regal dignity of his figure was displayed, and the pensive charm of his beautiful features developed itself in the inquiries he made after her alarm, was augmented by the contrast between that and his rustic appearance.

In a short time her party arrived, to whom she mentioned the services she had received from the stranger; but the air of constraint with which they thanked him at once opened his eyes to the impropriety of his appearing in the dress of an Irish peasant in the boxes of a theatre; and blushing as he slightly bowed to their thanks, he attempted to retire.

It was Catalani's benefit: at that moment she appeared on the stage, and the first notes she uttered rivetted him to the spot. Armida's exquisite tones, and that peculiar style that belonged only to those two singers of all he had ever heard, rose with painful sweetness to his recollection, and overpowered by

his sensations, he leaned against the box door.

“He has certainly heard Italian music before,” said the lady whom he had attended.

“Impossible!” repeated the person she addressed; “where could a fellow of that appearance have heard Italian music?”

“Oh! but observe his eye: what sensibility! how brilliantly tremulous is its light! what a figure! yet how unconscious of the exquisite grace of the attitude he has assumed!”

“Grace!” repeated the other, “how can you apply the term to the figure of a young Hercules: he looks able to support the pillars of the house, if it were falling about us.”

“What a subject for a painter!” said the admiring female.

“Yes, if he meant to sketch the leader of a banditti,” said her companion.

Connal starting at these last words,

the only ones he had heard, hurried out of the box. As he tried to make his way through the crowd in the passage, he was suddenly encountered by a spectacle that made him hope his senses were false—Gabriella leaning on the arm of Desmond: they appeared to have just entered, and were hurrying to one of the upper boxes. Speechless with amazement, he gazed after them. Immersed in the crowd, neither of them saw him: he followed them, and ignorant of the house, wandered about for some time till he found himself in a box exactly opposite to that in which they were seated: he had now leisure to observe them. It was indeed Desmond! but what a change: his youthful figure already appeared wasting with vice and dissipation: the bloom of innocence had fled from his cheek, and was succeeded by that deep and feverish flush that bespeaks the passions and the conscience alternately accusing each other; and his eye, that once

had the calmness, the brightness, and the tint of a summer heaven, now gleamed with the wild and sullen fire of anger, vice, and shame. Gabriella was little altered, but there was even more boldness in her look and more freedom in her manner than ever, and in spite of his ignorance of the manner of a town, he could observe by the appearance of the women around her, and the manner in which she was viewed by the men, that she had sunk to the lowest level of female degradation.

While he revolved a thousand plans how to extricate Desmond from the ruin in which he was visibly plunged, his ear was caught by the conversation of two persons behind him.

"I pity that young man," said one of them, pointing to Desmond, "beyond all power of expression; he is scarce beyond the age of boyhood, yet his career will probably be as short as it is shameful and miserable. He is of an ancient family in

the west : he was in an English regiment, commanded by Colonel Wandesford, and distinguished himself abroad ; but that girl you see with him escaped from her family and friends to put herself under his protection, and though he assured her he was irrevocably engaged, she wrought so strongly on his vanity or his sensibility, that he yielded, and she became his avowed mistress. She has destroyed his health and his peace : he has assured her he does not love, and will not marry her, yet he suffers her to hang on him like a spell. She has followed him to Cork, to Limerick, and now to Dublin, but their resources must soon fail, for he will be deprived of his commission for his misconduct, and then nothing remains for him but a pistol, or for her, but a brothel."

" Oh, Desmond !" murmured Connal, gazing on him with eyes dim with tears ; " is that indeed the brother I loved, I reared, I watched, I prayed for. I re-

signed myself almost without a murmur to the peril and shame of my destiny, while I hoped your's would be bright and honourable. You, whose name I hoped would shed light on the darkness of mine; you, who I thought would build my tomb, and stand by it in grief and honour, the defender of your brother's dust."

"But why don't he join his regiment?" said one of the strangers. "It is on service against the rebels."

"She would not permit him," said the other; "besides, the disturbance is quite over: the leader was hung the other day at Galway assizes. It was strange that his name was totally unknown in Dublin, though at one time there were serious apprehensions entertained from his courage and conduct: he was said to be of an ancient Milesian family, but so obscure, that no one ever learned who he was. It is not impossible but he might be a relation of that unhappy boy: all the Mile-

sian families are connected. How dreadful if they had ever met in the field !”

At these words Connal rushed out in an agony, which, had it been observed, must have betrayed him. For the remainder of the night he wandered about the house, almost unconscious where he was. He wished to save Desmond, and the information he had just received that he was unknown in Dublin gave him some faint hope of its possibility ; but the thought that accompanied it had wrung his heart beyond its power to bear.

The entertainment was over, and he was again borne on by the crowd : he again saw Desmond and Gabriella at a distance, and pursued them till he saw them enter a house in Grafton Street. He hesitated whether to follow them or not : he dreaded Desmond’s impetuosity, now aggravated by conscious error, and passions habitually inflamed : he dreaded that he himself, in that moment of agita-

tion, was not master of all his passions. He knew that Desmond might bear remonstrances, but not reproaches; and exhausted as he was, he continued to traverse the streets till he believed he had attained sufficient forbearance for the interview. He then knocked gently at the door, and the moment it was opened, passed the servant, and rushed up stairs. Through an open door he saw Desmond alone, stretched on a sofa: on a table before him, by the half-extinguished candles, he saw wine, a broken glass, and a pistol. He sprung into the room, and bolted the door. Desmond started up, and involuntarily seized the pistol: had it been presented to his breast that moment, Connal could not have bid him hold: emotion had taken away all power of utterance from him, but a single glance shewed Desmond the countenance of his brother, melting with affection, amid the struggles of grief, anguish, and amazement. The first movement of the

impetuous Desmond was to attempt some outrage on himself, and he glanced with horrible wildness round the room for some instrument of destruction. As Connal, fearing more for his brother than himself, wrested the pistol from his hand :

“ I will not live,” cried Desmond, writhing from his grasp : “ I will not. Stay and witness my death if you will. I will not survive this night.”

And he struggled with such fury, that Connal, whose strength was defeated by his feelings, found he was unable to contend with him, and suddenly relinquishing his hold, burst into tears. Frantic as he was, Desmond was restored to sensibility by this sight.

“ And you weep for me,” he cried, with penitent horror : “ you, from whom misfortune never could wring a tear.— Oh ! Connal, this is too much for me—even for me : if you have any mercy,

revile me, trample on me; but not another tear, if you do not mean I should destroy myself."

And his own burst forth with a vehemence that he in vain tried to smother, by dashing himself on the sofa, and burying his deluged face in his hands.

"Ah! my poor Desmond," said Connal, "if your own reproaches thus convulse your heart, how could I bear to add mine to them."

"For what purpose then did you come here?" said Desmond, trying to harden his heart against his brother, that he might rid himself of his presence. "What brought you to me?"

For a moment Connal was startled by this question, but recollecting what he had heard at the theatre, he recovered himself, and replied:

"I hope to save you from destruction."

"Me!" repeated Desmond, with a

frightful laugh: "Oh! return then, you come too late; character, health, peace, honour, destroyed, what can be saved?"

"All" replied Connal, with convincing energy, "all; if by the fixed virtue of one resolution, you break from the chains that bind you in this dungeon of corruption, and rise a man, and free."

"Oh! she hung about me so!" cried the fluctuating Desmond. "My passions were so inflamed by disappointment!"

"Speak not of the past," said Connal; "a retrospect to evil generally leads to a relapse: you must renounce her this night, this moment."

"Would you, could you sacrifice a woman that declared that she adored you? Oh! Connal, it is so sweet to be loved, and one who renounced her family, her rank, to follow you."

"Would I!" repeated Connal, while a proud blush burned on his cheek: "I will venture to say you have never heard

a precept from me, Desmond, that I have shrunk from adding my example to. Would I—I did : this very woman, who adores you, persecuted me with the most shameful solicitations.”

Desmond’s fiery cheek and indignant glances shewed how deeply this intelligence wounded him, and he sullenly murmured :

“ My superior in every thing ! and did I accept of a rejected wanton.”

“ Nay, Desmond, ask yourself if at this moment your vanity is not more injured than your sensibility : at this moment you are hurt not because you loved her, but because she did not love you : is such an object worth the sacrifice you have made to her ?”

Desmond struggled with conviction a few moments, and then said impetuously :

“ I am a wretch, the very slave of passion and vice : I am not fit to think for myself—speak, determine for me,

Connal, tell me what I am to do, and if death be the consequence, the task will be more welcome."

"Subdue these passions, Desmond, or they will destroy you: at this moment your very reparation borders on error: the path you are to pursue lies broad and plain before you: return to your duty, return to your regiment; employ yourself in the business of your profession: perhaps it will soon call you to trials that will demand your utmost strength to bear."

"And you would have me appear in the degraded light I must among my brother officers again?"

"I would have you go before further misconduct renders it impossible for you to appear at all. Yes, I would have you join them, though I were convinced that mine would be the first breast against which your sword would be pointed."

And in the warmth and swell of his feelings, he was upon the point of dis-

closing the whole of his situation to Desmond, but he was interrupted by the impetuous gratitude of his brother, who, grasping his hand, and almost kneeling to him in the sudden change of his feelings, oppressed and even tortured with praises the man whom a few moments before he tried to drive from his sight.

“ You have indeed saved me from destruction,” he cried : “ this wretched woman, for whom my infatuation drove me almost to defy you in her cause, see how she has used me : this letter, which I found on her table to-night, was to have been delivered to me to-morrow.”

Connal read, and shuddered at the depravity which dictated it : it informed Desmond, that weary of his society, she had fixed on another protector ; that pleasure was her object, and pleasure was only to be found in variety : it concluded with expressing how little regret she felt at quitting a man who had never loved her, and had insulted her by affecting compassion for her, while he

was only the dupe of his own vanity, and her determination to make him the object of her pleasure.

In this at least Gabriella had acted with sincerity: if she had ever felt an attachment of the heart it was for Connal: the strength of his mind and his devotion to Armida had enabled him to break from her fascination, but she had broken through all constraint in following him: her character was injured, and her passions were stimulated, and she looked round not for love or happiness, but for the most attractive object she could discover. In perfection of form Connal could be rivalled only by his brother, and the youth and passions of Desmond gave her hopes of success, which were but too fatally verified.— But with Desmond she was not happy; his conscience and his heart reproached him: the image of Endymion haunted him for ever, and while compassion and a false sense of honour would have in-

duced him even to sacrifice life for Gabriella, he would much more willingly have resigned it to escape from his subjection to her. This however was terminated by herself, and in spite of his wounded pride, Desmond felt all the joy of a captive on his liberation.

"And this letter," said Connal, "you were reading as I came: but how came this pistol here?"

Desmond turned away, and Connal shuddered.

"Ask no more questions," said Desmond: "you saved my life."

A long silence followed: the clock struck four: the candles were just extinguishing, and the grey morning light was seen breaking through the windows.

"Where do you sleep, Connal?" said Desmond.

"I will not sleep to-night, or to-day," said Connal, "till I have seen you quit this place. I have arrived in Dublin

but to-day, but I believe I have a lodging in Francis Street. Come with me and I will resign my bed, if I have one, to you."

Desmond rose and followed him with a submission that proved he had resigned all self-government, and was only anxious to be relieved from all further thought for himself. Connal, soothed by the hope of restoring him to happiness, employed every topic of consolation during their walk, and his fraternal admonitions, so mild in wisdom, so rich in affection, healed the lacerated but generous heart of Desmond, while they probed its wounds even to the bottom. They were admitted in Francis Street, where they found the family already up, and Connal, unwilling that his brother, an officer in the king's service, should be seen with him, whose real situation was but too well known to those about them, detained him in a private room till the moment he was to quit Dublin. Again the affec-

tionate heart of Desmond burst into an agony of gratitude, and Connal in vain tried to suppress the emotions that his natural but ardent expressions excited. As the moment of departure arrived, the reflection of their next meeting, and the prophetic words of the stranger, pressed with intolerable weight on his heart : he traversed the room in gloomy silence.

“ When shall we meet again ? ” said Desmond.

“ Heaven knows, heaven alone knows,” said Connal ; “ where we shall meet again.”

“ Wherever it may be,” replied Desmond, “ it will be consecrated by the presence of the best of brothers, and the first of men.”

“ Cease, cease,” said Connal, turning from him : “ Desmond, when we praise man, we know not what we do : if an hour should arrive, that would see me as much sunk in the eye of mankind, as I am now raised in your partial imagina-

tion; if you should hear that I was guilty, fallen, punished—”

“Impossible! Impossible!” said Desmond, kindling into rage though his brother was his own accuser.

“Nothing is impossible,” cried Connal, almost losing his self-possession at this unlimited confidence; then recollecting himself, he more calmly said—
“Should such an hour arrive, remember that even then I had a heart for a brother.”

They then separated. Connal listened to his parting steps, and twice his hand was on the lock of the door to call him back and tell him all; but he said to himself:

“Heaven may yet interpose to save me, and is this a time to try him with fresh wounds, bleeding as he is at every pore.”

The moment Desmond was gone he summoned his host, and inquired the direction and proper mode of addressing the distinguished personage whose influence he had hazarded so much to solicit.

“Ah!” said the man, “it is too late:

he has resigned his situation, and quitted Ireland, and he has been succeeded by one in whose hands none but your enemies would wish you."

This intelligence almost overthrew Connal: his very soul seemed sickened with sufferings and disappointments. He did not speak; but the silent working of his features betrayed more agony than many words.

"And I have then quitted my post, left my men without a leader, deserted Armida:—oh, God! deserted her in a barren isle, amid banditti—all in vain."

The thought of Desmond, and of this disastrous journey being the means of saving him, at last broke on his mind, and his swoln heart seemed to respire for a moment.

"If my sufferings are made the instruments of blessings to others," he thought, "heaven, let me not repine. How little good can be done, and how much evil is there to atone for."

He was turning away without uttering a word, when the man who had been a tenant of his grandfather, and felt all the attachment of an Irish follower to the family, followed him, and inquired where he was going.

"In truth, my friend," said Connal, with an agonizing smile, "I hardly know myself:—I believe back to my men, to perish with them: all other hope almost is denied me now: though my offence was involuntary, it has been pursued too far, and aggravated too much to afford a prospect of mercy. He who takes up arms against his country, let his cause be what it will, had better have turned them against his own breast."

"In the name of heaven," said the man, "stay and rest this one day here:—you are safe in this house: there is not a man in Dublin that knows you but myself, and if they did, I pray it may fall into ruins over my head if it refused to shelter the grandson of O'Morven."

"The grandson of O'Morven will not purchase shelter by the ruin of him who gives it," said Connal, a faint gleam of his native pride breaking through grief and wretchedness. "I will be gone this moment. I do feel there is that weight of ill-fortune laid on me, that wherever I am I must bring evil and danger on those around me.—Let me begone: I am strong and well:—this Herculean frame was not given me for nothing: it has been already well tried, and is likely to bear more before it is laid at rest."

The man then importuned him with such urgency of distress and affection to stay but a few hours, that Connal felt almost subdued.

"I believe I must," said he, pressing his burning forehead with his hand, in which a thousand pulses seemed beating: "I believe I must yield to this weakness for once."

He then threw himself on the bed, the first he had lain on for many months,

and intense fatigue operating with this rare indulgence, procured him a long and tranquil sleep.

It was evening when he awoke, and, reproaching himself for the delay, he rose hastily, and after a slight refreshment, which the importunity of his host forced on him, he was hurrying away, when the recollection of his utter destitution occurred to him, and returning, with a cheek dyed in crimson, he was compelled to borrow a small sum for his journey, which, however, he scrupulously limited to the mere demands of necessity. He then set out, though it was now night, determined that nothing should delay his progress.

As he passed the corner of the street he was assailed by a cluster of unfortunate women, from whom he found it impossible to extricate himself without a force he was unwilling to use. He evaded them for some time, till sickened by their coarse importunities, he was compelled

to break from them by main strength. One still continued to follow him with solicitations which he blushed to hear from a female, and at length caught hold of his arm, and attempted to detain him with a smile of invitation; but the poor wretch's features were so ghastly with famine that her smile was like the yawn of a sepulchre. Shuddering with pity and horror, he attempted gently to disengage himself, as she still hung on his arm: but her weakness was such that at the slight effort he made she fell on the pavement. Unspeakably shocked, he turned to raise and assist her.

"It was hunger, not wickedness," said the wretched woman, lifting her long matted hair from her famished face; and as she rose, slowly her eyes were fixed on him. She screamed, and shrank from his arms: "O'Morven, is it you! and may I die in your sight at last!"

Again he raised and viewed her closely:—it was Mary, the girl whom Wandes-

ford had seduced, and whom Connal well remembered in her days of youth and innocence.

Struck with her sight, which recalled so many early associations, his heart melted within him, and the daring leader of the rebels wept over a perishing prostitute.

"Ah! I know you better than you know me," said Mary: "I am altered since we first saw each other, though you are not."

"Yes, yes, I do know you," said Connal, eagerly: "what can I do for you?"

"Keep me from dying in the streets to-night," said the miserable woman, "for die I must, and so must my poor child, for I can't get bread for it even by wickedness."

"It shall not perish," said Connal, forgetting his own destitution.

"Do you know that it is Wandesford's child?" said Mary, looking at him, as if

she feared that name would revolt his humanity.

"I care not whose it may be," said Connal; "it must not perish if I can save it."

"I have a wretched garret in Bride-street," said Mary, after a long pause of weakness: "if I could reach it, and see that child once in your arms I should die in peace."

He attempted to support her there; but exhausted by famine, she was unable to proceed, and Connal, fearing she would perish in his arms, rushed into a public-house that was still open, to demand some assistance for her.

A man followed him to where she was leaning against the corner of the house; but when he saw her rags, her squalid face, and the filth with which she was covered from her fall, with a savage oath he bid Connal take care of his strumpet himself.

"She is not mine," said Connal, with an earnest simplicity that only extorted a laugh from the ruffian.

Connal, struggling with his resentment, implored him at least for some refreshment for the starving sufferer.

"I will bring her something if you will pay for it," said the man; "but she shall not enter my house, to bring shame on it."

He went, and returned with some wretched wine, which he refused to let her taste till he was paid for it; and Connal in vain broke in on his narrow stock, but she was unable to swallow it when he had purchased it.

"The sight of you does me more good than wine: that can't save me now," said Mary.—"I wish I had life enough in me to tell you how I came here; but my breath is going fast, and the earth will lie heavier on me for your thinking bad of me after I am gone."

"Do not exhaust yourself," said Con-

nal, tenderly ; “ I will think every thing you would wish me.”

“ It is too late to speak kindly to me now,” said she, kissing the hand that supported her with her cold lips. “ I am going fast ;—but the wretched way you found me in was not my own doing :—Colonel Wandesford found out how I told Lord Montclare’s daughter all about him, and he had me taken up, and threatened my life, so that I was forced to take my oath on the sacrament I would go to Dublin, and never trouble him more : so I came, and misfortune followed me. I don’t know how I have lived latterly ; but to-night I got desperate ; hearing the child cry, and looking at the hungry walls, I ran out to get a morsel for it any way, and I met you : it was a blessed meeting, for though I must die, my child will not.”

“ It shall not ! it shall not !” cried Connal, melting with compassion, “ while I can earn a morsel for it.”

A gleam of passion trembled in her dying eyes :—

“ The beautiful daughter of Lord Montclare never loved you more than I did, but she deserved you better.”

“ Speak no more,” said Connal, starting at the name : “ you exhaust your strength. Try if you can reach your lodging now.”

She attempted to obey him, but in vain, and he was obliged to bear her in his arms to her miserable mansion.

The child was asleep on some straw. Connal hurried out, after laying the mother beside it, for food for them both ; but every place was now shut, and after traversing every street he knew, he was compelled to return, and sit beside the bed of death.

She knew him still, and when, throwing himself on the ground beside her, he took her damp, convulsed hand, she struggled to smile on him, and when he

removed her dishevelled hair and wiped the cold drops from her forehead, her lips moved to thank him, though the power of speech was gone.

Connal had witnessed and encountered death where it had stared him in the face, and been dealt to his naked breast, blow after blow, till he wondered at his own safety, and he wished himself in such a scene again, while compelled to watch this slow and painful gradation of life. Her last effort was to clasp her hands together in supplication, and then try to extend them to her child, whom she thus committed to his care with the dumb eloquence of death.

Connal, whose attention to her had not remitted for a moment, now turned to the child, and gazed on it, believing it asleep.

"This is my enemy's child," he said: "if I love it, it must be because my heart is not devoid of humanity. I was not formed for the scenes of violence

into which I have been forced :—oh ! that the streams, for want of which my heart has been so long withered, may once more be permitted to flow in their natural channels, that I may live to those whom I love and am loved by.”

Yielding to the emotions that overflowed his heart, he stooped to kiss the infant as it lay : he was struck by the coldness of its touch. He raised it in his arms : it was dead : it had slept its life away, and lay at rest beside its mother.

The people of the house soon entered, to strip the bodies of their miserable clothing, and the room of every thing it contained, except the straw on which they lay.

Connal was then left alone with the corpses, and unable to leave their remains without one witness to save them from indecent neglect, he continued to lean against the bare walls till a coffin, provided by the parish, was procured, and he expended the remainder of his scanty

stock to bribe one attendant to follow them to the grave.

It was night when he commenced his journey. The fate of Mary had taken from him all thought of his own, and he set out without reflecting how a journey of upwards of a hundred and twenty miles could be performed by an individual destitute of the means of procuring a single meal.

As he entered on the circular road, he observed a horseman, who appeared to be waiting for some passenger: he rode a few paces forward, and then retired to the side of the road. Connal advanced without fear or care: the horseman placed himself full in his way, and bending from his horse, said—"You are the man I wanted; I know you by your figure: no man like you has been on this road.—Delany, of Francis-street, sent me here to watch for you, and give you this, and this: he knew you would not take them from himself:" and as he

spoke, dismounting, he put a purse into Connal's hand, threw the reins of his horse over his arm, and springing over a low wall, disappeared in a moment.

Connal, thus unexpectedly delivered from difficulties with which it was almost impossible to contend, pursued his journey with resolutions to indemnify, by any sacrifices that nature could spare, the generous man who had thus contributed to his safety.

He proceeded with such expedition that on the second night he reached Loughrea, and dark as his prospects were, Armida's look, her smile, broke like a beam of light on his heart, and he felt it was impossible for those who love to despair, though nothing but the object was left to them in life. As he rode slowly along the border of the lake, a delicious calm breathed itself into his soul; the enthusiasm of love made all things seem possible; a dream of future happiness wandered over his heart; and

his late stormy existence seemed to disperse before its light.

As he turned into the dreary road that leads to Gort, he heard the report of a pistol close to him, and the ball, whizzing in his ear, passed through his hat, within two inches of the brain. He started, but was instantly compelled to exert all his strength to manage his terrified horse, and, while drawing up the reins, was dashed from his seat by a blow that seemed given by a flail. He fell, and while trying to disentangle himself from the reins, three men rushed on him at once: two fastened on him as he lay, apparently with intent to strangle him. With convulsive strength he rose, tore himself from their gripe, and dashed one of them to the ground with a force that left him senseless; but, while grappling with the other, he felt himself several times wounded in the back by the third. Despairing of life, he determined at least to sell it at the price of one of his mur-

derer's, and turning on the man behind him, with whom, though on one knee, he was almost on a level in height, he tore the instrument from his hand: it was a case-knife, and the edge, as he wrenched it away, gashed his own almost to the bone, but he yet retained strength enough to plunge it twice into the ruffian's side. He fell with a groan, which thrilled Connal with horror, for he had never yet shed the blood of a fellow-creature in a personal conflict.

There was but one now to be dealt with, for one lay breathless, and the other apparently dead. As Connal, staggering with horror and loss of blood, approached him, the wretch threw himself on his knees, and supplicated for mercy, though Connal was unarmed. At that moment the light of the moon, as it rose over the Lake of Loughrea, fell on his face, and Connal beheld one of his own men. Twice with a trembling hand he wiped away the cloud of mist and

blood that hung over his eyes, and even when close to the man, he was unable to ask him the cause of this attempt, but gazed on him with eyes that doubted their own evidence.

“ Spare my life, spare my life !” cried the wretch, in an agony of terror ; “ I had an oath I could not break : I had an oath to take your life.”

“ To take my life !” repeated Connal : “ I twice saved your’s : I remember you well.”

“ Oh ! I am a dying man,” cried the murderer, writhing on the ground in torture : “ I feel I have broken a limb in that struggle I had with you ; I did not think you were so strong, or I never would have attempted it.”

“ You might have known it well,” said Connal ; “ for twice but for me you would have perished the night we marched from the mountain. Little did I think to have seen your hand aimed against my life, to whom you owed your own.”

"Oh, Christ, I shall die!" cried the sufferer, screaming with bodily and mental anguish: "I shall die, and my soul must go to hell. I have no priest, and there is a curse on my soul if I did not do what I swore, and I have no priest."

"You have a God," said Connal, solemnly pointing to heaven.

"Oh! don't talk to me of heaven," said the wretch; "so much the worse for me if there is. Help me to some cabin if you can: I knew you would be merciful, so I did not care what happened, and that was what made me more ready to take your life."

"You shall not be disappointed in the mercy you expected," said Connal, "though never was one more unworthy of it."

He then pursued, and caught his horse, and attempted to place the man on it, but the least movement of the animal was such intolerable pain to him, that Connal

was compelled to lift him in his arms, and proceed on foot with him to the next cabin. A boy was then sent to the town for assistance: a military surgeon was brought, and Connal, insensible of danger when humanity invoked him, performed offices about the patient which the people of the cabin shrunk from: he held, soothed, and sustained him, while the fracture was examined, and the dressings prepared; and such was the impatience of the sufferer, that but for Connal's presence he would have refused to permit the surgeon to set or dress it.

"You owe your life to this gentleman," said the surgeon; "but for his assistance mine would have been unavailing."

The man groaned, and hid his face: the surgeon then rising, glanced his eye on Connal, whose figure had struck him on his first entrance; and observing his pale countenance, and hair matted with

blood, he exclaimed with astonishment at his neglect of himself, and begged to examine his wounds.

“ They are not worth attention, sir,” said Connal: “ a few scratches that I got defending my servant from the ruffians who attacked us.”

But as he spoke, the deadly sickness that he felt, and the cold drops with which his face was bedewed, made him feel the necessity of yielding to his friendly importunities; and when he submitted to be undressed, the deluge of blood that still issued from his wounds, and drenched the hands of the surgeon, filled him with mingled horror and admiration.

“ Good God !” said he, “ is it possible that man could bear what you must have borne without a murmur ?”

“ I was occupied by my attendance on that poor object,” said Connal, “ and scarce felt I was wounded, till my clothes were soaked in blood.”

"He ought to be a valuable servant to such a master," said the surgeon.

Connal sighed, and at that moment the thought of this man's ingratitude was the only wound he felt. He liberally rewarded the surgeon, and the moment he retired, returned to the road to discover if any traces of the other two assassins remained. There was no appearance of them: some marks of blood were on the road, and the knife with which he had been wounded. The man, who had been only stunned, recovered, and finding his companion dead, had flung his body into the lake, and fled. Connal, after examining every adjacent spot by the moon, was compelled to return to the cabin, and to his astonishment it was deserted. Symptoms of fever, the dread of the common Irish, had appeared on the sufferer with such violence, and his ravings were so horrible, that every individual fled from the danger, and not one would

remain with him but the man against whose life his arm had just been lifted. All day Connal listened to his ravings, and held him on his bed of straw: at night, when he sunk into a sleep, he went out in search of medicine and necessities which he determined to administer himself, for he remembered the inquiring looks of the surgeon, and dreaded that this unhappy man was doomed to be the means of his destruction, either by his crimes or his sufferings. But this close confinement, the infected air, the anguish of his wounds, and the agitation of his mind, at length subdued him, and he felt the same fire burning in his veins with which those of his companion were scorched. Still not daring to quit the cabin, for fear of the delirious cries of the sick man betraying him to an accidental passenger, he continued to aggravate his complaint by want of air, refreshment, and the damp of the cabin floor, on which he lay, and at length was

only sustained by the hope that his companion would recover in time to bestow on him some of the care which had preserved his own existence. The very day that his aching limbs refused to support him any longer, and the cabin seemed on fire to his burning eyes, his companion recovered his strength and reason sufficiently to be able to give himself that assistance that Connal could give no longer. He disclosed the state to which the care of him had reduced him, and though he shuddered at being compelled to entrust his life to the man who had so lately attempted it, there was no alternative, and he had a faint hope, that, though devoid of principle, he was not dead to gratitude and humanity. The effort he made to speak increasing the confusion and pain of his head almost intolerably, he hastened, while his intellects remained, to inquire the cause of the attack made on him by men whom he had never injured.

"You thought so," said the men, "but there were some that hated you, only because they could find no fault with you; a captain of rebels ought to have more of the devil in him than you had."

"And who prompted you to take my life," said Connal, "for I cannot yet believe it was your own design."

"It was Brennan," said the man after a long pause."

"Brennan!—gracious heaven! the man whom of all the band I trusted and valued most."

"Yes: but he fell in love with the lady that followed you: Lord Montclare's daughter, and he knew that he never could gain her while you lived, and so he swore us to murder you."

From that moment, a burning frenzy raged in Connal's brain: not a gleam of reason remained, the horrors of Armida's fate fell like a mass of burning iron on him, and crushed by its fiery torture, every faculty and every feeling lay pros-

trate within him. The intense heat of that summer prolonged his sufferings, and for three months he was lost in alternate paroxysms of stupor and delirium: when he recovered, not the slightest trace of former events returned to his mind, nor was there any thing around him to recall them: he found himself stretched on a bed, in a room he had never seen before: an old man was sitting on the foot of the bed with his back to him: Connal sat up, and looking round, uttered a few words of reason: the old man turned, and sinking on his knees, the sudden burst of joy and devotion with which he welcomed this glimpse of sanity almost extinguished it: "Don't you know me?" he cried, kneeling beside Connal, and kissing his white emaciated hand: "I am the man you passed the night with in Eyrecourt, that you saved from dying of hunger: this is my bed, and my house that I bought with the money you gave me: there was a blessing in it, and every

thing has prospered and throve with me since: and don't you know me then after all? sure there is not a stone in the wall but what ought to know you, as if you were their owner."

"I believe I recollect you," said Connal, "but you must forgive me, for my memory is much shaken."

"Oh, blessed be the hour," said the man without heeding him, "that I was benighted, and lost my way coming from Loughrea, and groped about till I got into a hole of a cabin where they had left you tied down on a lock of straw, with nothing but an empty pitcher beside you—I made no more of lifting you up in my arms, and putting you across the car, no more than if you were a child, and brought you home to your own house here, for your own it is, and here I have kept you safe without a soul knowing it, while all the country was in an uproar about you: that villain that was with you, the devil receive his soul, though

you spared his life, and watched him in his fever, until you caught it yourself, the very minute he saw you on your back without a soul to help or stand by you, he went and gave information to a magistrate, and you were not a minute out of the cabin before he himself led them there in pursuit of you, and ever since they have been scouring the country day and night for you, while you could not so much as lift a hand to bless yourself."

"Oh, I remember it all!" said Connal, starting from the bed, "and I must be gone this moment."

The entreaties of the old man and his wife, who even knelt to him, were now in vain—the image of Armida, deserted—Armida in the power of Brennan revived all the fierceness of frenzy without its delirium, and it was not till when attempting to break from them, he fell prostrate on the floor, that he became conscious of his situation: but not even this could detain him for an hour, the

irritation of his mind producing an artificial strength. He tore himself from their distracted prayers, and pursuing his journey with supernatural speed, seemed to overcome danger by desperation alone. No one encountered him as he rode; fate appeared to reserve him for this struggle, and he arrived in the very moment no arm but his could have saved her.

END OF VOL. III.

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THE MILESIAN.

CHAP. I.

Two such I saw—their port was more than human
as they stood,

I took it for a fairy vision, and as I past I worshipt.

MILTON—*Comus*.

WHEN Desmond quitted Dublin, his first intention was to join his regiment, but finding their quarters were in the neighbourhood of the castle, and believing Wandesford still to be there, he bent his proud spirit to the necessity of apologizing to his colonel for his absence, before he appeared among his brother officers.

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It was evening when he reached the castle; its heavy mass of shade, strongly defined on the blue twilight of a summer sky, seemed like a part of the rock it towered on: as he gazed on it with many emotions, he observed on an angle of the rock where it rose perpendicularly from the ocean a figure of the most delicate texture standing alone, and its solitude, combined with its aërial slightness, made it scarcely appear human.

“ Ah ! ” whispered Desmond, “ if that should be Endymion.”

It was indeed that unhappy girl, the victim of her mother's selfish ambition, who, pining with a passion for which she had no name, had laboured under a partial derangement of reason since Desmond's absence from the castle, and was permitted to wander about the rocks alone in the evening, as the only relief of which her malady seemed susceptible.

At the sight of Desmond, uttering a

shriek of joy, she darted towards him, nor did she perceive in the twilight the altered figure of Desmond; his fevered cheek, and the agitation of his manner when he attempted to address her.

The innocence of Endymion, her ignorance even of her sex, her unconsciousness of every thing but her attachment to him, seemed the bitterest of unuttered reproaches to his early experience in vice and passion.

"Ah, Desmond," she cried, "where have you been? I have wandered every night on these rocks to meet you. They told me you were gone, but I could not believe them: I was sure I should meet you at last. Where have you been? You look as if you came to me from another world."

"From another world indeed," said Desmond, sighing; "I wish not to remember where I have been."

"And are you come to be present at this marriage?" said Endymion.

"What marriage?"

"The marriage of your father and my mother: it is to take place to-night they tell me."

"My father and your mother!" repeated Desmond, turning pale with horror; "impossible! it cannot be."

"Oh, yes, they are to be married to-night."

"Not if I can prevent their union," cried Desmond, rushing from her.

"Good heaven, what do you tell me? and in what an hour am I come!" he continued.

His dread of this union overpowering every thing, he hurried into the castle.

Endymion, whose state of mind was rapidly verging to a confusion of the real and visionary, now doubted, from the suddenness of his departure, whether it was him she had seen, and sitting down

on a fragment of the rock, she exhausted her fancy in vain attempts to recall the vision that had appeared to her.

Desmond in the mean time was traversing the castle in search of his father. As he passed through the gallery a door suddenly opened, and Lady Montclare, her mourning weeds exchanged for bridal white, and her fine figure sparkling with jewels, appeared at it.

She started at his sight, but a moment after advanced and extended her hand to him.

Desmond indignantly retreated.

"Desmond," she cried, in the softest tones of insinuation; "Desmond, do you not know me?"

"Never, I hope, as my father's wife," said Desmond, his heart swelling with grief and rage at her confidence.

"What do you mean by those words, Desmond?" said Lady Montclare, smothering her resentment.

THE MILESIAN.

"Oh, Lady Montclare, do not drive me to extremity, do not force me to utter what has never yet passed my lips."

She turned haughtily from him.

"Have mercy on me," he cried, in a subdued voice; "I supplicate your mercy for my father; you know too well there are circumstances which must revolt the heart of a son against his father forming such a connexion."

She turned suddenly on him as he followed her.

"Desmond, have mercy on yourself: if you provoke my resentment, you may tremble at its consequences."

She then broke from him, and Desmond, too much agitated to follow her, leaned for support against the door, exhausting conjecture on the cause of this extraordinary union.

This artful woman, who had disguised Endymion as a boy to recover her rank and consequence, was now determined to preserve it by any sacrifice.

She had lived in dread of detection ever since her arrival in Ireland, as both Wandesford and the O'Morvens had claims on the property in default of male issue. It was this had made her so anxious for the union of Armida with the former; it was this had quickened her suspicions in discovering the attachment of Desmond and Endymion, and still retaining some confidence in her own attractions, and believing that passions once inflamed are easily impressed with a new object, she wrote the anonymous note to Desmond, which he believed to be from Endymion, and in the interview which it produced she exhausted every wile of seduction, in vain hoping to make the slave of her passions the confidant of her secret.

Desmond escaped from her snares, and the next day quitted the neighbourhood; Wandesford and Armida too were re-

moved, she cared not where, provided it was to a sufficient distance from her.

She had now but one more to deal with, the weak and sordid father of Connal and Desmond. She repaired her charms, renewed her arts, and at length succeeded in inducing him to marry her; by this step she believed she had completely secured her safety, even if he should discover the secret, as it would then become his interest to preserve it.

It grew dark, and Desmond was still leaning, almost unconsciously, where Lady Montclare had left him, when he was startled from his reverie by the sound of his father's voice, who was approaching with the priest.

Desmond advanced, trembling and scarce knowing how to address him.

O'Morven seemed overcome with confusion at the sight of his son: he expressed his joy at seeing him, wondered

where he had been, and what had brought him to the castle, without waiting an answer.

“To witness an extraordinary event,” said Desmond, with a feeling he could not repress: “will you allow me, sir, to speak with you one moment in private?”

“Father Morosini may be a witness of whatever you ought to say,” said O’Morven.

“Is he your son, sir?” said Desmond, with increasing anguish; “is it necessary he should witness the first conference of a father and child who have not met for almost a year?”

O’Morven then sullenly walked aside with him, and Desmond, closing the door on the officious priest, advanced to his father.

“Father, am I too late to prevent this fatal marriage?”

"What do you mean?" said O'Morven.

"I cannot tell you," said Desmond, almost choaked with emotion; "but be assured that it is no common cause that could agitate me thus: if this union were for your happiness or honour, I would not thus kneel to you to prevent it."

"I cannot comprehend you," said his father: "Lady Montclare is a woman entirely above my expectations; she is a woman of rank—she is——"

"She is," interrupted Desmond, "oh! I know too well what she is."

"Desmond," said his father, affecting resentment, that he might escape from him, "if you conduct yourself with respect to Lady Montclare and me you are welcome to the castle, if not——"

"You need not propose the alternative, sir," said Desmond, proudly, "I shall neither be a witness of your marriage or an intruder on your happiness."

The room in which they were opened on the rocky terrace that commanded the sea, and Desmond rushed out on it, almost wishing himself in the waves that beat below.

Endymion was still seated on the rock where he had left her, and his heart thrilled with agony while he thought that this strange union boded some evil to this ill-fated victim of another's evil and falsehood; yet as he approached he was involuntarily soothed by the contemplation of her beauty, the dark luxuriance of her hair, the touching colour of her face, and her air, neither masculine or feminine, that seemed not to belong to mortal beauty.

"Are you not afraid of the chill air on these rocks, Endymion?" said he, hanging over her: "that cheek is too delicate for our rough winds; yet I think you have lost something of your Italian paleness since I saw you."

Endymion put her hand to her cheek, and Desmond gazed on the delicacy of both, so unsuitable to the dress she had been compelled to assume.

"I am glad," said she, "that any thing has diminished the unfortunate fragility of my appearance, which I fear makes me still more the object of your hatred."

"My hatred!" cried Desmond: "oh, heavens! can I appear to hate you?"

Endymion with strong emotion pointed to the castle from which his arrival had excluded the O'Morvens.

"Ah!" thought Desmond, "how little does she know that a single word of mine could overthrow those claims, of whose falsehood she is unconscious."

"I have excluded your brother and you from that castle," said Endymion, with a sigh that seemed to torture her slight frame; "yet that castle, aye, the whole world, would I give to be that brother you love so well."

Every nerve in Desmond's frame trembled with delight to hear her thus unconsciously avow her passion; and he had scarce resolution left to feel the danger of this interview, and, repressing what he was about to say, turned towards the castle.

Endymion followed him, and twining her arm in his, complained of weariness.

"I was not so feeble in Italy," said she; "I was as light as a bird, but now at times the very air seems to oppress me."

"Do you wish to be in Italy again, then?" said Desmond.

"In Italy!" repeated Endymion: "oh! that the sea had swallowed me when I quitted its shores: oh! that you had suffered me to perish the first night of our meeting, or saved me to see you once, and die."

Desmond, terrified at this burst of frenzied passion, implored her to be calm,

and as he spoke, involuntarily his arms were folded round her.

"If you wish me to be calm," said Endymion, struggling faintly to break from him, while her dissolving eyes belied her struggles; "if you wish me to be calm, release me from your arms, for while your voice, your touch, is so near me, I am wild."

"I will release you," said Desmond, dejectedly: "I will be gone, if you wish me; only tell me what I shall do to make you tranquil."

"To make me tranquil!" a flash of real madness darted from her eye: "oh, snatch me to your heart! Hold me to it one moment, but one moment, and the next plunge me into those waters that are rolling at your feet."

As she spoke, she flew from him, conscious she had said something she ought not, though scarce remembering it.

Desmond, bewildered and tormented,

continued to wander on the rocks, till wearied he threw himself on them to think of the sounds he had heard trembling on the midnight wave on his passage to England—those sounds so sweet and mournful, that they seemed to announce the future influence of Endymion on his destiny.

The night he first heard them all was calm, smooth, and bright, like his mind before he beheld her. Now the evening had grown dark and gloomy, the cold rain fell round him, the rising wind hissed sadly on the bleak rocks, and the sounds he heard were like the knell of those wild wishes he hardly dared to frame.

Suddenly, far different sounds struck on his ear: it was the servants of the castle rejoicing at the marriage, and the revelry of the domestics was a strange omen, contrasted with the despair of the son.

"Ah!" said Desmond, "there can

be but one motive for this union. They intend to defraud or to injure Endymion: they fear the secret will be betrayed by her simplicity, and they are taking means to secure it that bode no good to her. Perhaps my presence may be some protection to her: I may defend her from their schemes, or assist her to escape from them."

And easily reconciled to any thought that flattered him with the hope of remaining near her, he returned to the castle, determined to watch the artful mother of Endymion at the price both of his pride and his feelings, but resolved not to witness the disastrous gaiety of the night. He lingered in the passage till one of the servants passing shewed him to his former apartment.

He retired, but not to rest: his sleep was disturbed by dreams, some of which made an impression on his imagination so strong, that he could scarcely believe the

scenery was not real. He dreamed he was in an apartment of the castle where Endymion was lying asleep: he had an indefinite sensation, so common in sleep, that he was compelled to watch her slumbers. Suddenly Lady Montclare entered: she was followed by his father, who was wrapped in a shroud, and whose face exhibited the livid appearance of death. They approached the bed where she lay, and Desmond gazed with horror on his father, whose dead and wasted hands held a taper, and who appeared to follow Lady Montclare as a subservient spirit does the steps of an enchantress.

They hung over Endymion for some time, and then Lady Montclare, suddenly drawing a dagger, attempted to plunge it into her heart. Desmond springing forward to save her, received the blow in his own, and at that moment the floor opening beneath his feet, disclosed a vault into which the arms of Connal ex-

tended to draw him, and as he gazed giddily down on the horrible depth, he observed Armida lying on a corse below.

He shivered and awoke: the storm of the night had passed away: the moon shone faintly through the heavy casement. Desmond sat up and tried to shake off the impression of his dream; but in vain: the cold drops trembled on his forehead still, and struggling in vain with feelings which he condemned, but could not resist, he rose and walked up and down the room; but every step he took in the place where he received the impressions seemed to confirm them, and ashamed, though unable to overcome them, he quitted the room and wandered through the passages of the castle. The lights that burned in them were not yet extinguished, and Desmond thought as he entered that he beheld a white figure gliding before him for a moment: the steps gave no sound; there was no echo,

and at first he believed his senses, confused by visionary terror, had deceived him, till a faint moan, issuing through a door in the passage, convinced him that something living was near him. He followed the sound, which grew more audible every moment, and found it conducted him to the chapel. He entered: a single light burning on the ground faintly shewed the altar: the window of stained glass, emblazoned with the figures of the Virgin and Saint Patrick, and in the lower compartments with the arms of the O'Morvens; and the vessel for holy water that stood at the narrow entrance of the sacristy; all the rest was dark, except a partial gleam that fell on the dusky canopy of the seat where the O'Morvens received the rites of their church, when possessors of the castle.

Desmond paused, and the recollection that here the sex of Endymion had been discovered by the old harper, in the con-

ference between Lady Montclare and her priest, struck on his imagination as if this place was doomed to be favourable to his hopeless passion.

As he advanced he beheld a figure in white clinging to the rails of the altar, and so absorbed in devotion, that not a movement betrayed its consciousness of his approach, and but for a faint sound, between a groan and a prayer, that it uttered from time to time, it appeared like a part of the altar it hung on. Desmond was already beside it, before the figure, raising her head, discovered the features of Endymion, pale and wild with superstition, grief, and passion. Desmond gazed on her with pity and horror: her lips were white, and her limbs shivered with cold.

“ Good heaven ! Endymion, what has brought you here—alone, at night, and uttering these groans.”

Endymion did not answer, but waved

him away with a stern expression in her countenance. Desmond, believing this was insanity, still urged his inquiries, till Endymion, with terror in her looks, said:—

“I was doing penance.”

“Penance!” cried Desmond, snatching her from the cold pavement in his arms. “What crime have you committed? What can you have to atone for?”

“Ah!” said Endymion, reclining on him, yet trying to avert her eyes from his gloomy face; “are not my sensations at this moment a crime?”

“And who has imposed this on you?” cried Desmond. “What monster has made you kneel almost naked on these hard stones at midnight?”

“It was Father Morosini.”

“And for what?”

“For thinking of you.”

“For thinking of me?”

"Yes. I cannot pray, I cannot do penance, without incurring it again for my wanderings: if I close my eyes to shut out external objects, it is you I see: if I kiss the picture of the Virgin, it is your lip I seem to press. I sometimes try to pour out my heart on the objects of devotion, and to think I love the crucifix, while I press it to my heart, but it is only because the pressure reminds me of the night you once held me to your's. Ah, Desmond! how shall I murmur at the penance, when the very crime is a pleasure?"

"And do you then love me, Endymion, love me so fondly? Confess it then to me alone, my little trembling darling, and your penance shall be gentler. Don't tell that rigid priest; he will make it a crime, merely for the sake of punishing it."

"I told him only that I might have the pleasure of uttering your name: no

one else would listen to me. They told me it was impossible I could love you ; but if it be not love, there is no name for the sensation I feel for you. I am sick and wretched when you are present : I am like an insect in the sun, dying of too much brightness, yet when you are gone, I only live on the thought when I shall see you again. When you approach me, the same trembling, the same sickness of the heart oppresses me ; I have no wishes, no thoughts, no words to express them ; I gaze on you till I am entranced. Feel, Desmond, how my heart is throbbing."

"No, no, Endymion, it would only bring another penance. Stand there, and I will lean on the other side of the altar : we cannot be too far from each other while you tell me how you love me."

"Ah ! let me lean on you at least, and hide my cheek in your breast : I never can tell you how I love you, while your eyes are fixed on me : love and devotion both require the shade."

"No, not a step nearer, or I am gone: I speak, and I will listen for ever: I may be mad, but I will not be guilty. Do you love me as you did, Endymion, that night we were in the cave together?"

"Oh! yes, more, but I fear you more: you used to drive me from you, and tell me it was a crime for us to love each other; but since last night you are no longer afraid to approach or speak to me. There is a different expression in your eyes when you look at me: your voice has more softness in it, and you caught me in your arms as closely as the night you saved my life, and imagined I was a woman. Ah! Desmond, come no nearer me, I feel the fears you have taught me: your words bind me like a spell, though I know there is no danger in being near you."

"'Tis you have come nearer, Endymion: you know not your danger. I feel the railing tremble under your hand: is it the cold that makes you tremble?"

“Cold! oh, no, I am burning.”

“And so am I. And must we waste away, thus gazing on each other, till life is exhausted, without hope, without possibility of relief?—die in each others sight, die of each others looks? Oh! what penance can Morosini inflict like this!”

“Oh! that he would impose no other,” said the impassioned Endymion; “that we could linger here for ever, forgetting how suns set and rose, till we forgot every thing but each other. How often have I wished that you were a statue, that I might sit at your feet, and gaze on you till I grew cold as stone myself. Do you remember the story of the Italian, who fell in love with a statue, and viewed it in despair till she died. Ah! let such a death be mine, for what is life compared to it? But, alas! I am not a woman, and it would be a shame for a boy to die of love.”

VOL. IV.

C

"Then it would be a shame for a man," said Desmond, no longer repressing his burning tears, "yet I believe that shame must be mine."

"Hush! hush!" said Endymion, in a voice of fear, "I hear Father Morosini coming."

"What does he come for at this hour?" said Desmond.

"To see if I am performing the penance he enjoined."

"And how long does he stay?"

"Oh! he often stays hours with me."

"Alone, at night?"

"Yes."

"And you so slightly clad?"

"Yes, that is part of the penance."

"Ah, the monster! it is he that deserves it. Endymion, I will not quit the spot till you promise to tell me what Morosini says to you."

"Oh! he sometimes talks so strangely I do not understand him, nor do I re-

member any thing of it but when he speaks of you : but you need not fear him, for he often looks as kindly on me as you do, though then I love him least."

Desmond, alarmed and incensed, yet unable to explain himself to Endymion, was obliged to retire, for Morosini was just approaching: he concealed himself behind the door of the chapel, in hopes of hearing their conference; and the imperfect sounds tortured his suspicious impatience, till afraid of breaking in on them if he continued to listen any longer, he forced himself away.

He had just fallen into a slumber that was soothing him with the image of Endymion, when a noise at his door awoke him: he listened, and heard a sigh so deep, that it seemed like a last effort for respiration. No answer was made to his inquiry who was there; the sigh was repeated, and at length he heard his name

pronounced by the voice of Endymion.
He rose, but did not open his door.

"Endymion, is it possible you are there?"

"Yes, I have been lying on the ground at your door this hour."

"Oh! retire to your room, and try to rest."

"I cannot sleep, and this is the only rest I wish for."

"Retire, I conjure you," said Desmond, in a voice that announced the last effort of resolution: "what can have brought you here?"

"Only to be near you. Ah, Desmond! had you ever loved, you would have known the delight of pressing the ground the steps your lover had trod."

"I know it! I know it! and those who love and fear as I do would rather embrace the ground than the object."

"Ah, Desmond! you feed me on poison: torture and delight are mingled in

my heart. Why do you speak with such tenderness to me, and yet talk nothing but of danger and fear? If I am guilty, why do you say you love me; and if I am not, why may I not approach you?"

"I do not know why," said the racked Desmond; "neither heaven or nature forbid it, and if you stay there I shall not be able to forbid it longer."

"Oh! open the door for one moment: let me but lean my head one moment on your breast, my burning eyes would close so sweetly, and I would dream the dreams of heaven there."

"Impossible! impossible! your thoughts are innocent, but to listen to them makes me guilty."

"Ah!" said Endymion, sadly, "I have been the child of mystery from my birth, and every one round me deals only in mystery: to-night you held me to your heart, and now you banish me: your tones are softer than they were, yet they

fill me with more alarm than when they were sterner. Ah! rather than torture me with this wayward fondness, bid me begone and die."

"Never!" cried Desmond; and forgetting all constraint, he threw open the door, and sunk on the ground beside her.

"Desmond!" she cried, starting at his altered looks, though she could not understand their expression, "Desmond! the wildness of your eyes terrifies me: I feel there is danger, though I cannot comprehend it. How your hand burns! how you tremble! Are you afraid?"

"I am, I am," said the panting Desmond.

"And what is it we fear? I have seen you sit beside your brother; I have seen you lean on his arm; I have seen your hand locked in his."

"Yes, yes, you have, and would it were locked in his now, instead of your's."

“ And why can you not caress me like a brother ? ”

“ Because a woman cannot be my brother,” said Desmond, distractedly.

At these words Endymion started from his arms, and with a scream of horror flew towards her own apartment; and Desmond, terrified at the consequences of his own imprudence, pursuing her, kneeled at her door, and supplicated in his turn for admission in vain.

No answer was given, but as he leaned against the door that was but slightly closed, it gave way, and by the lights that still burned within, he beheld Endymion, pale and breathless, stretched on the floor. He rushed in, raised her in his arms, bore her to a seat, and looked round for something to revive her, dreading either to leave her, or call for assistance.

On the table near which he had placed her stood a crucifix, with a prayer-book

and rosary, and Desmond thought with horror of the disturbance he had caused in this young, unconscious heart, that had sought to subdue its struggles by religion. When she first opened her eyes, she gazed round her without perceiving him, as he stood trembling at a distance; but the moment she beheld him she hid her face in the folds of her loose dress, and waved him to be gone.

"I will go from you for ever if you will," said Desmond: "but have I offended beyond forgiveness by the discovery that we may love without a crime?"

Endymion, still silent, repeated the motion of her hand with impatience.

"Oh! tell me," said Desmond, with anguish, "tell me the meaning of this mysterious silence. What have I done? Speak to me, even if you bid me quit you for ever."

Endymion made an ineffectual effort to

answer him. At length she said in a choaked and hollow voice:

“It is not love, but death that fills my thoughts now: you have pronounced my doom.”

“I pronounced your doom!”

“Yes, I have heard my mother say to Morosini, when she did not think I heard them, ‘Should she ever learn she is a woman, she must live no longer.’”

Desmond listened speechless with horror.

“I knew not what she meant,” continued the unfortunate girl, after a long pause: “I do not even understand what you have told me, but the horror I feel at my heart tells me I shall not survive this night.”

“Yes, you shall, angel! victim!” cried Desmond, wild with grief and passion; “you shall live, in spite of their wickedness: their crimes have driven us almost to madness, but they dare not menace you with death.”

But Endymion no longer listened to him: the eloquence of tenderness, the energy of hope with which he tried to sooth or to inspire her were in vain: the impression was not to be effaced: and kneeling before her crucifix, she implored him with such solemnity not to disturb her in the last offices of religion, that Desmond was silenced.

His blood ran cold when he saw the whiteness of her moving but silent lips, the trembling of her locked hands, and the breathless and supernatural abstraction with which she listened to his supplicating agony, and he was forced to leave her, dreading that even this impression, visionary as it was, might verify itself in the dissolution of her weak and agitated frame.

It was late in the following day when Desmond joined the family. He recalled the events of the preceding night, and after some internal debate determined to

mix with them, and if possible discover the intentions of Lady Montclare towards her daughter.

There were no guests at the castle: nothing announced the festivity of a recent marriage; and Desmond would have found the silence and gloom around him congenial to his feelings, but he was disgusted by the overstrained courtesy of Lady Montclare; and alarmed by the obvious dejection of his father since his arrival at the castle, his mind had been so agitated, that he never made an inquiry after the absent members of the family.

Connal he believed to be still in Dublin, and Armida and Wandesford in England. The servants from respect, and his father from indifference, never mentioned either their names or situations, and thus he remained in the castle, as in Dublin, utterly ignorant of the events that had taken place in his absence.

Wearied by the hollow kindness of his hostess, he quitted the castle, and wandered on the rocks till night, in vain revolving the danger that threatened Endymion from unknown machinations.

She had not appeared all day, and he began at length to be infected with the terrors under which he had seen her sinking the preceding night, when he was startled by a figure flying towards him with the speed of wind—it was Endymion. She rushed into his arms, and hung panting there, unable to hear his repeated inquiries into the cause of her agitation.

“Save me! save me!” she cried at length, and repeated these words in a voice hoarse with horror, till convulsed she could repeat them no longer.

“Endymion, my life! my soul! what is it you fear? I will save you. What shall I save you from? Speak to me.”

“Oh, from my mother! from Moro-

sini: she has just determined to send me from the castle under his protection—I heard her this moment.”

“His protection!”

“Oh, it is not death I dread, but for worlds I would not be in the power of Morosini after last night.”

“In his power! I will perish before I see you in his power. Fear nothing, Endymion, you are safe, if a human arm can defend you.”

“Ah! nothing can defend me: I know what they mean to do with me. Ah! Desmond, save me from them, or kill me this moment: I would rather die even by your hands than fall into his.”

“What is it you fear? What is it they menace?” cried Desmond: “shall I go into the castle, and confront that villain with your false mother? Shall I avow my knowledge of their guilty secret, and force them to act openly and justly by us?”

“Ah, if you leave me here,” cried

Endymion, clinging to him with terror,
“ I shall perish, and if I go to the castle
they will tear me from you.”

“ Where, where shall I shelter you ?”
cried Desmond, clasping her in his arms :
“ there is not a more desolate being on
earth than I am. Oh ! that I could tear
open this heart and hide you in it.”

“ And is this your love,” cried Endymion, wringing her hands in despair ;
“ and will you give me up to Morosini ?”

Her utter ignorance made her believe
that the means of existence were as easy
beyond the walls of the castle as within it.

Desmond, carried beyond himself by
this appeal, caught her in his arms, and
hurried along the terrace.

“ Where are you taking me ?” said
Endymion, who was now terrified at
every movement.

“ I know not where,” said Desmond :
“ any where from those monsters.”

“ Ah ! stop !” cried Endymion, over-

come by the speed with which she was hurried along.

Desmond, tremblingly obedient to every word she uttered, paused when he reached the foot of the rock, and seating her on it, knelt at her feet.

"Ah! Desmond," she cried, "this humiliation terrifies me, while I know I am in your power. Do what you will with me, I am helpless and ignorant."

"Beyond the shadow of those walls I have not a relation on earth."

"Oh, that you had left me in ignorance of my real situation. As a man I should have trusted my life to you; but as a woman I tremble in solitude with you."

Desmond, still kneeling at her feet, soothed her with the humblest language of respectful devotion.

As she viewed the scenery round her—the infinite sky, the bright worlds that glittered in it, the endless expansion of

ethereal space that conveyed at once to the soul the idea of its dignity and its creator, she said mentally :—

“ It is impossible that a heart capable of love can admit a guilty thought in such a night as this.”

The emergency gave her a resolution of which her natural character was destitute, and she extended her hand to Desmond with an action that would have disarmed treachery itself of dissimulation, and taught confidence even to a hostile savage.

Desmond accepted the precious pledge with the purity of devotion.

At that moment the house of St. Austin, the uncle of Rosine, occurred to his recollection, as affording the only asylum to which he could conduct Endymion with safety.

Rosine and her uncle had sat up late that night: the misfortunes of Connal and Armida had been the subject of their

thoughts, and they had sat together till each was almost afraid of mentioning to the other the ominous apprehensions with which their minds were filled for the issue of their disastrous fortunes and passions.

On a sudden a loud knocking was heard at the door.

St. Austin, dreading the approach of the rebels, had started up, when Desmond entered, with Endymion, pale, exhausted, and almost fainting in his arms.

Resigning her to the care of Rosine, he desired a short conference with St. Austin.

As well as his distraction would suffer him to articulate, he described the situation and the danger of Endymion, exposed to the arts of her mother, and the unhallowed passion of Morosini.

"And where do you mean to place her?" said St. Austin, who had long

suspected the secret of Endymion's sex.

"Unite me to her this night," said Desmond, "and I shall then have a legal right to protect her from danger, and from insult."

"You have anticipated my wish," said St. Austin: "I have already thought of a retreat for you; but I did not dare to mention it till I understood your intention towards this persecuted victim, whom the vices of those who should have protected her have driven for shelter into the arms of a stranger."

Desmond, though he blushed with indignation at the name of Endymion being united with suspicion of wrong from him, suppressed his feelings, and again implored St. Austin to give him a legal right to afford that protection which her natural relatives had denied her.

St. Austin, aware of the danger to which those two persons, so young and so

passionate, were exposed, thus driven into each other's arms and into solitude, consented to unite them, though he foresaw many evils from such an abrupt and premature marriage.

They then returned to the room where the females were.

The supplications of Desmond, and the advice of St. Austin, soon subdued the timid Endymion, and trembling and blushing at the name of a state of whose duties and claims she was as ignorant as a child, she gave her hand to Desmond, still in her masculine dress; and their midnight union was witnessed only by Rosine and her uncle.

As Rosine gazed on the animated fondness of Desmond, and the shrinking and timid softness of Endymion, as she saw their youthful figures bend to receive the benediction that pronounced them united, and the soft and brilliant light of passion that trembled over their

expression, chastened for a moment by the sentiment of devotion, and the solemnity of an indissoluble engagement, she thought with anguish on the different fate of Connal and Armida, compared to whom Desmond and his young bride already seemed to have reached security and happiness.

The next morning St. Austin disclosed to Desmond the retreat which he designed.

About a mile from his house, the bank of the river that flowed past it was hollowed into a rocky recess, where the thick foliage of the trees and shrubs that hung over it completely concealed a cottage placed in its very bosom.

It had been inhabited by a hermit, whose simplicity and piety often induced St. Austin to visit him. Fond of his solitude, and not ostentatious of his sanctity, he was little known by the country-people, and but for St. Austin would

often have wanted food in his solitary retreat.

He had expired about a week before, and was interred near his retreat, which had remained untenanted since; and here St. Austin counselled Desmond to retire with Endymion, till the intentions of Lady Montclare were discovered.

With food it was easy for St. Austin to supply them; and there was no danger of discovery while he and Rosine alone were conscious of their retreat.

Here they remained buried in passion and solitude,

“The world forgetting, by the world forgot.”

Their beautiful figures were sometimes seen by twilight on the rock that overshadowed their habitation, for they never ventured out by day.

The neighbouring fishermen believed them blessed spirits hovering over the hermit's grave, and crossed themselves as they rowed their boats near his retreat.

The prospect of a new and dear companion in their solitude, though it increased their solicitude, did not diminish their happiness, and their young, impassioned, romantic spirits felt no privations at this fairy residence, so inaccessible to the inhabitants of the world.

CHAP. II.

WHEN Connal returned to the isles he was struck with grief and horror at the state in which he found his followers.

He had left them a few brave men, generously penitent for their crime, and anxious to merit the mercy of government: he found them, on his return, a numerous and ferocious band, mutinous to their leader, hostile to government, and formidable to the country.

The daring spirit of Brunnan during his absence had led them into every excess of violence.

The discipline that Connal had established was destroyed: instead of confining themselves to the islands, they had spread themselves along the shore, exer-

cising every outrage and aggression on the inhabitants ; and, from the indiscriminate admission of every vagabond and profligate into the ranks, their numbers had increased beyond all power of control, and the spirit of humanity and honour, that Connal had tried to inspire them with, was utterly extinguished. It was in vain that he attempted to restrain their excesses, and restore the discipline they had thrown off: in vain he punished with rigour every act of unnecessary violence, and urged on them the madness of thus exasperating government, when their safety was yet suspended on its mercy. His courage, his vigilance, and his resolution, were in vain opposed to the inflamed passions and unruly habits of a rabble mad for rapine, and intoxicated with the success which had hitherto attended their incursions.

But this success was to be of short duration: troops were collecting in every

part of the country to march against them, and Wandesford, who had been recruiting his regiment during the summer, was to command the forces.

Trembling for the fate of Armida, and hopeless of his own, Connal was compelled to exert all his resolution to conceal from her the danger he could not but see. He in vain looked round his desperate band for one firm and faithful arm to whom he might entrust her in the hour of danger ; and, no longer looking to life for hope, he almost limited his agonized prayers to her safety alone. One day that the rebels had surprised a detachment that was marching along the coast, the conduct by which Connal had extricated them from the perilous defile where they were exposed to the fire of the musketry, and the courage with which he had braved it till the last man had quitted the glen, extorted a shout of acclamation from the most mutinous of the

band, and they swore they would follow such a leader while they retained life.

Connal seized this moment, while bleeding with wounds he bore for them, to implore their mercy for the few survivors, who had flown for shelter to a bog at some distance, and stood there in expectation of their fate.

The rebels, in the impulse of the moment, promised they would not molest them; but Connal had scarcely reached his tent, when, by the horrid yell that struck his ear, he knew the work of blood was begun.

He rushed out with his wounds unbound, and beheld these few unfortunate men pursued over the heath by the rebels with every instrument of destruction their fury could seize.

Connal called, he commanded, he adjured them to spare a few unarmed and wounded wretches: he would have in-

terposed his own breast to defend them ; but their pursuers were between them and him.

Sick with horror at the sight, and faint with his neglected wounds, he threw himself on the ground, and cursed the hour he became their leader.

At that moment the yell was renewed.

Starting up, he beheld at some distance a young officer, flying like the wind, and thirteen or fourteen rebels, like wolves after their prey, pursuing him with pikes and scythes, not so much to kill as to mangle and tear.

Frantic at their barbarity, Connal seized a musket from one of the men near him, and loading it, fired among them.

They turned, believing that the fugitives had rallied on them ; but the officer, after staggering a few steps further, fell.

Connal instantly flew to his assistance.

As he passed the heath like lightning, the old harper, who was sitting on the ground, and who knew his step, called to him to save the unfortunate young man.

"He cried to me to shoot him as he flew past," said he: "it was not death he feared, but to be torn to pieces alive with the claws of those cannibals."

"Oh! there will be a curse on such doings, and on all concerned in them."

Connal did not wait to hear him: in a moment he was kneeling on the ground beside the victim.

His clothes had been almost torn off in his flight; his bare bosom was streaming with blood; his long, light hair steeped in it, stained the ground on which it fell scattered and soiled. His arm was over his face: Connal removed it.

Speechless and frozen at the sight, he

remained gazing on it, while the sufferer lay bleeding almost to death.

He had no words, no tears; but he gazed fearfully round the men, who by this time surrounded him, as if to discover who had done this deed.

At last he murmured — “The stranger said we might meet in the field, and is it thus we have met at last: oh! Desmond! Desmond! my brother! my brother!”

A burst of agony shook his frame, and he fell prostrate on the bloody breast of Desmond.

The rebels, with a murmur of compassion, raised the brothers, and bore them both senseless to Connal’s tent.

One of them, who had attained some knowledge of surgery, examined Desmond’s wounds: none of them were mortal, though, from the loss of blood, he long continued senseless, and even when he revived, was unable to speak.

The moment Connal's senses returned, he flew to his brother's bed, and feeling an unconquerable horror at seeing him in the hands of his murderers, had him removed, exhausted as he was, to the retreat where he had concealed Armida.

He walked beside him as they bore him along, bathing with tears the damp hand that could no longer return the pressure of his; and at that moment his sufferings might, before a tribunal of inquisitors, be allowed to have expiated his offences.

That night, when he reached Armida's cottage, accustomed as she was lately to see him exhausted by fatigue and emotion, the agitation and horror of his countenance struck her, and she felt, for the first time, that passion itself was unequal in resources of relief to the vicissitudes of a life so various and so agitated.

He had neither the step of a hero nor

the gaze of a lover as he entered the cottage.

Seating himself at a distance, he drew his thick hair over his eyes, and clasped his hands over his forehead, while Armida with anguish saw the tears bursting through them.

All her influence, powerful as it was, failed to reconcile him to himself this melancholy night.

“What have I done!” he cried in despondency: “I have murdered my brother!—I have dragged the first of women to exile and misery!—I have dealt ruin and shame around me: the very earth is sick of my weight, and I linger on it only to meet some punishment that will make its inhabitants tremble.”

Armida, scarce recovered from her recent terrors, exerted all her powers to sooth his tortured sensibility: she adjured him not to confound crimes with misfortunes, and reminded him of the hu-

manity with which he had atoned for use of unlawful power, and conciliated even his enemies.

“ Ah ! ” said Connal, “ I thought myself moderate before I possessed power ; but who can trust his heart ? — and is it not the heart that heaven regards and punishes for its wanderings ? ”

“ Did I never feel the swell of pride while marching at the head of hundreds devoted to my will ? Did I never, in the thought of obtaining a victory, forget the sacrifice of lives it must cost ? [Did I never in the moment of triumph forget how father wept for child, and brother for brother, as I do now ? ”

Armida struggled in vain to support the sinking spirits that had so often sustained her's.

“ Ah ! no, ” said Connal in unutterable anguish, “ my fate is approaching : neither patience nor courage, submission to suffer, or energy to dare (and I have

not wanted them), nor even you—you, my guardian angel, with all your excellencies, can save me now!--I am a lost man, and all that cling to me must fall with me. I am a falling rock; and the very flowers that twined themselves in my ungenial soil must be crushed in my uprooting."

"Ah! my love," cried Armida, "it is in your hour of distress that I proudly claim my right to suffer with you: the former energies of my mind are concentrated into one powerful sentiment, to which life or death now appear equal. It is not in the summer of life, when every object is green and verdant, that passion loves to gaze on its object; ah! no; it is when life is chequered with misfortune, like the discoloured foliage of autumn, that the traveller loves to linger in its shade, though its leaves are falling around him, and its dissolution murmurs in every wind that shakes them."

Connal, subdued by her tenderness, forgot the sentiment of grief that inspired and mingled with it, and while he knelt at her feet, and held her soft hand to his throbbing forehead and bosom, their pulsation became calmer, and in her presence he almost ceased to believe himself guilty, for he felt he was no longer unhappy.

Desmond's recovery was slow, and his safety was ascertained long before his reason was restored.

Connal, who had watched him every day while he remained in a state of insensibility, hid himself from his sight from the moment he could recognize objects. He could not bear to appear before him in his present degradation, and he felt the superiority of Desmond's situation, stretched on the bed of death, where honourable wounds had laid him, to his own at the head of a rebel host.

As the time for his departure at length approached, Connal, though resolved to

remain unknown to him, could not forbear to sooth the yearnings of his heart by the sound of his brother's voice.

Desmond was conducted at night to the shores of the isle, and desired to remain there till his guides returned.

There was neither moon nor star. Desmond leaned against the rock, and heard the surges break at his feet; but he could distinguish no object, nor conjecture for what purpose he had been brought there.

Suddenly a tall figure, closely muffled, stood beside him.

"Young man," said he, in a disguised voice, "you are now recovered: a boat is on the shore to conduct you from these isles.

"I trust you have not wanted care during your abode with us."

"I thank you," said Desmond; "but I am determined not to quit this till I have seen my brother."

"Impossible!" said the stranger;
"your brother could not encounter your
sight."

"I know him better than you," said
Desmond; "I know my sight would do
him good. Though the fiercest of his
men were about him, he would give me
one look, and the thoughts of his youth
would visit his heart again."

"Perhaps he dreads your sight,"
said the stranger: "he fears your re-
proaches."

"He fears nothing," said Desmond:
"he never feared. Who shall reproach
him? His offence was involuntary:
—Connal must be the sufferer, but Wan-
desford was the criminal."

"We will leave his public character—
he is not of your opinion, perhaps," said
the stranger: "but can you forgive your
own injuries and sufferings?—Can you
forget it was the crime of your brother
that brought you almost to the grave:

with the fangs of his banditti yet reeking from your flesh, can you forgive him?"

"For one of that banditti you speak strangely," said Desmond.

"I am indeed one of them," said the stranger, "and must be involved in their punishment, but I have kept aloof from their crimes."

"I would you were all as sure of heaven's forgiveness as of mine," said Desmond. "How can I feel I am near those shores without a heart burning with affection? There is not a stone on them that is not a memorial of his more than fraternal, his parental love and care for me; and the sea that beats on them shall wash them away before their traces leave my heart."

"And if you should see this unhappy man," said the stranger, "are you sure that no stirring of resentment, no opposition of sentiments, no anger at his fall, would disturb your meeting?"

"Prove me," said Desmond; "try me this moment: bring me to his presence."

"You are in it already.—Desmond, Desmond, the life of a rebel will not afford such another moment as this."

When their emotion had subsided, Connal conducted him to Armida; and anxious if possible to detain him a little longer in their retreat, he went out in quest of the old harper.

"Cormac," said he, "are the men apprised that my brother is in Wandesford's regiment? Do you think he would be safe in remaining here a day?"

The old man confessed there were loud murmurs against Connal for preserving the life of one of Wandesford's officers, against whom their resentment was implacable.

"And what did you say when you heard them?" said Connal.

Cormac repeated the common topics by which he had tried to appease

and excite their compassion for Desmond.

“Ah!” said Connal, impatiently, “you do not speak as if you were pleading for a brother: his safety must not be trusted with you.”

He then returned, anxious and disturbed, to the cottage.

Armida when she first beheld Desmond blushed: the dejection of misfortune and habitual danger had struggled with but not subdued the proud consciousness that once marked her expression: even yet she seemed not “less than arch-angel ruined;” but Desmond, when he saw her, wept.

They passed all that night in melancholy conference, and Desmond’s story alternately awoke the wonder and grief of Connal and Armida, who were alike unsuspecting of the sex of Endymion, or the iniquitous art of her mother.

“We lived in paradise,” said Desmond,

describing their hermit retreat; " but soon a fiend broke into it.

" One lovely summer's evening, we had lingered late on the bank of the river, watching the birds dipping into the bright wave. Ines (for she had assumed the name by which she remembered being called in infancy) compared them, as their white wings gleamed in the sun, to spirits on their dismissal from the body, hovering over the water of life in Elysium.

" Long security had left us without fear, and she sung for me one of those songs which I heard on our passage from Italy before I saw her, and never forgot the impression they conveyed—that it was a woman or an angel that sung.

" It was growing dark, when we saw a boat approaching: Ines grew pale, and, falling into my arms, said she saw the figure of Morosini in it.

" I looked intently; but it was too

rk to distinguish : the boat drew near the bank at some distance, and was concealed from our view by the trees that hung over the river. I carried Ines to the cottage, and secured it as well as I could : I had no arms, and I dared not quit her to go to St. Austin for assistance. Overpowered with terror, she lay down ; I continued to sit up : there was not the slightest noise, not a breeze past the casement ; and the river, how still and calm it was that night. It was long past midnight, when as I was sitting beside Ines, who had fallen asleep, I observed the light of the moon as it shone in at the window was obscured : I looked up, and the face of a man appeared through it. What were my feelings at that moment ! I could not leave Ines even for a moment to discover our danger : but I was not long left doubtful of it. The door was burst open, and Morosini with two others rushed in : I heard him say : —

“ Bind him if he resists, while I carry her away.”

“ In mere despair I struggled with them, and had got one of them to the ground, when Ines, who awoke with the noise, and saw Morosini by the light of the moon, frantic at his sight, rushed out of the cottage: he pursued her. I had by this time overcome the other ruffian, and followed her too: in frenzy she flew up the rock; she saw him close behind her: she plunged into the river and perished: before my eyes she sunk, and with her my unborn babe.”

He stopt, and for a long time no sound was heard but his convulsive sobs, and the audible grief of Armida and Connal. At length raising his head, and fixing his eyes on his brother, he said with desperate calmness:—

“ Yes, I lost her, and I came here to meet my death from your hand, Connal.”

Connal, unable to answer him, waved his hand for him to cease.

"I have no recollection of what followed that moment," said Desmond: "I believe I was deranged: to St. Austin I owe my life: had he known to what he was restoring me, in humanity he would have let me perish. No trace of her ever was discovered. The body of Morosini, who must have perished in the attempt to save her, was afterwards found: perhaps he repented when he saw his victim struggling in the waters. A demon might have wept to see it, so young, so helpless, so beautiful, so innocent! Ines! Ines! how hard and cold is your bed for so soft a form, so fond a soul! Ines, my heart is as chill since it lost you as the waters where you lie, and your image rests there as your corse does below the cold dark current. I would I were with you, Ines, without a crime, for often I feel as if even that would not deter me from

following you. I would have pined away, gazing on the water that flowed over her, till by accident I heard what the deep solitude we lived in had concealed from me."

Again he stopt : Connal hid his face : he knew his meaning well.

"The first moment I heard it," cried Desmond, with a flash of his native impetuosity, "I thought I could have stabbed you to the heart : the shock, the overthrow of all my proud thoughts, my devoted veneration, my ambitious affection for you, was too much for me. I flew to join the regiment, and Wandersford, I believe, was gratified by the thought of seeing us armed against each other, for instead of bringing me before a court-martial for my desertion of duty, he employed me in the detachment among whom I suffered.—But I felt while marching I was a coward ; I dreaded not death, but the sight of you, Connal.

I think that had I met you in the field I should have fallen like a child before you, but the wound that pierced me would have been inflicted not by your hand but by your look."

Connal, who saw and trembled at the effect of this language on Armida, beckoned his brother to follow him; and they quitted the cottage together. They wandered on the shore for some time in silence. Connal's heart was too full for words; at length he seemed to dismiss with one heavy sigh the weight that hung on it.

"Desmond," said he, "heaven has sent you for my relief, in an hour when all other relief seems to be denied me. In this hour of solitude I may confess what my lips never yet confessed to man—My fears;—the lenity, or the contempt of government will spare us no longer: in a few hours perhaps I must lead a desperate band to their last struggle:

victory is almost hopeless, and even victory must be at length succeeded by defeat. We are too few to subdue a country; we are too numerous to escape from it: neither resistance nor submission can avail us: we may fall slowly, we may fall bravely, but fall we must: yet at this hour, urged to extremity as I am, beyond all resolution to cope with, almost beyond patience, there is but one chord of my heart that is sensible to fear: you know the name that awakes it; I cannot utter it: save her, Desmond; lead her from this scene of blood; place her in safety; and I think I can then kneel down and thank heaven with an unburthened heart, though its last drop was to flow the next moment."

Desmond listened, but his heart, chilled and withered by calamity, had no room for that glowing sympathy, that trembling ardour of benevolence that was its fruit in more genial hours. He promised

to conduct Armida from the approaching conflict, but he declared his resolution to return and perish, if they were to perish, with his brother. Connal's heart swelled with agony; he would have spoken, but his voice was choaked; and turning his head aside, he wiped away the tears that love, grief, and remorse, made alternately sweet and bitter.

"Connal," said Desmond, "more than the eloquence of man is in those tears, but their eloquence is in vain: what have I to do with life: happiness is gone with her who gave it, and honour is not for the brother of a rebel. Were I even restored to what I was, what would it avail: my notions of right and wrong are lost: the principles you taught me your own example has defeated: the world seems changed since I heard that Connal was a rebel. I can neither do good nor receive it from any one: no one loves me, nor do I delight to love.

Drive me not from your brave side, Connal; this wasted frame may be thrown before you in fight, and receive some ball that was aimed at you: this is all the use I can be now, and if this be denied me, I care not if I run on the pike of one of your band before your sight; it will give that relief to a wretch which a brother refuses."

A melancholy struggle of generous feeling followed between these unfortunate young men, but Desmond, obstinate in despair and vehement in affection, persisted and prevailed. They then separated, Desmond to prepare Armida for Connal's determination, and Connal to discover if the enemy was approaching, whose arrival he never expected to survive.

He rowed to the isle nearest the shore: as the morning was breaking, he found it full of tumult and alarm: the reports of the approaching forces were hourly

strengthened: the ferocious courage that had supported the band failed on the approach of real danger. About noon the rebel out-posts on the shore were driven in, and they could see their friends flying in all directions. Connal, though they were in no immediate danger, then thought it high time to move to their relief; and the shore, obscured by the smoke of the musketry, favouring their expedition, they embarked to save if possible the fugitives whose temerity had prevented their seeking shelter in the isles before the arrival of the military: but the shore, covered with soldiers, defied their approach, and the wretched rebels, driven at the point of the bayonet, were struggling for life in the waves. Connal in vain encouraged his men to row forward and save their perishing companions: they shrunk back, till he and two more leaping into the largest boat, under a heavy fire, advanced with daunt-

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less humanity and snatched some of the drowning wretches from destruction. A few were then incited by their example, and during the whole of that dreadful day Connal toiled among the foremost, through waves dyed with blood and strewn with corpses, till the soldiers, weary of unresisted slaughter, retired from the shore. In the evening, some who had concealed themselves among the rocks escaped to the isles, where the next day they purposed to invade them, and exterminate their inhabitants.

Connal, unable to snatch a moment's repose, passed the night in making preparation for the last resistance, dismissed Desmond to Armida's retreat, which in this hour, that demanded all the energies of his heart, he dared not visit himself, and two hours after midnight retired to his tent alone. During this last interval of solitude, he attempted to commit his thoughts to writing.

*The thoughts of Connal the night before
the engagement.*

“ In two hours the day that must decide my fate will break : the eternal revolutions of heaven continue undisturbed by the destinies of man, and the sun that will light the world the day before it is destroyed will perhaps rise as bright as the preceding. What am I, and those who must fall with me, compared with the generations that have flowed away : as we approach death, we are lost in the idea of the divine immensity, and our own existence, proud as we are, ceases to have importance in our eyes. Why should not I suffer, when the good have suffered ; why should I not fall, when the brave have fallen : we are insects struggling in the flood of time ; it passes on, and our struggles do not even create a dimple in its tide. Does this

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calmness intimate to us supreme indifference or supreme complacency."

* * * * *

"This is the hour that searches the heart of man, that makes him dread he will discover in it some hidden evil, the cause of all his sufferings.

"I have erred, and a few hours will decide whether I have erred beyond forgiveness: of human mercy I have neither hope or wish: I have erred from passion, not from principle, but am I not therefore more culpable. I have no leisure to examine my heart now; I have too many cares, and too much distraction: my mind is not as the mind of man ought to be when arming for its last conflict: there is a terror at the very bottom of my soul I dread to penetrate or disturb.—Had I never loved, had I never beheld the first of her species, my destiny would have been undivided, and the concentrated forces of my mind

would have produced something great even in error, and extorted reverence from mankind amid their censure.

“ But I loved as never man loved, and the thought of her makes me feel a coward at my heart. Armida, what would my enemies think of the rebel leader could they behold these tears.”

* * * * *

“ Great sufferings give us a kind of confidence in the protection of heaven: I have undergone so much, that I feel as if I had a title to demand immunity for her at least—yet often I dread that sufferings are not inflicted for nothing, and that where there is so much misery there must be some guilt.”

* * * * *

“ For the dominion of the world I would not live over again my life for the last ten months, or witness again the scenes I have witnessed.

“ Had I known but the smallest part

of the consequences that have attended my desperate attempt I would have submitted to any thing my enemies could have inflicted; I would have plunged into the ruins of my burning dwelling to escape them. I have suffered more than the horrors of warfare: I have none of its pride or pomp to sooth or stun me: I have seen the passions of men contending without that art which modern war teaches, to disguise their ferocity: I have lived daily with the men I led: I have seen the soldier's sufferings without the soldier's pride: I have witnessed misery in its naked, revolting, heart-sickening hideousness: I have seen their famine, their weakness, their fears—ah! their cowardice; the cowardice of want, ignorance, and sufferings, of frames wasted by hunger; of hearts broken by despair: I have seen all this, and been compelled to smile on the wretches, and lead them on, for I was a chief of rebels."

* * * * *

“ It would cure the ambition of the destroyers of their species to witness what I have been conversant with. Amid what sights has this day passed ! Beings, my fellow-creatures, flesh and blood like myself, parched and weltering in the wind, whose keenness blows spears and arrows into their raw and open wounds ; others so gashed and mangled, that of humanity not even the form remained, but through the memberless stump an horrid feeling of animation, making life more terrible than death.

“ I saw some, who, as I hung over them to discover a trace by which they might be known, grasped the hand with which I touched them with a force that nothing but force could shake off.

“ There must have been many in the remoter parts of the field ; there are many now while I write, who retain life enough to hear the croaking of the ravens that flutter nearer and nearer them every mo-

ment, and who perhaps will at last be dispatched by the fiends of some human beast of prey, who prowls about the field to tread out the last sparks of life, and strip the carcase, while its startings and heavings make their practised hands shudder to touch it."

* * * * *

"The morning is breaking; I see the glimmerings of day! on whom will it set? Armida, my last thoughts hang on you. The soul that retains its passions on the verge of dissolution must be immortal, and we shall meet again. Before the sun goes down pride will be low, and courage cold; but love that can warm the soul as its last struggle approaches will not desert it even when the struggle is past.

"I tremble now, but the extreme of danger is congenial to my spirit; and when I see my enemies, I shall be insensible of fear. There is but one heart in

the world that can understand and feel my last sentiment.

“ O’Morven trembled as he armed for his last conflict, and he would not have resigned that fear for the pride of courage and victory,”

* * * * *

The morning was grey and misty, and the heavy vapours that hung over the shore and the isles, mixing with the smoke of artillery, soon concealed every object under a volume of darkness.

Armida, though she rejected the thought of leaving Connal with a decision that left no room for importunity or argument, had consented to take shelter in the isle that he had collected the largest body of the insurgents in, and conceived the least accessible from the shore.

Here, in a rude cottage, between two rocks, whose reverberation rendered the sound of the engagement more tremendous, with but one female attendant, she

passed the whole of that dreadful day. No messenger arrived, no report reached them; at times, unable to bear the oppression of her heart, she quitted the cottage, and ascending the rock, tried to gaze round her.

All was mist and gloom; no object could be seen but the rolling volumes of smoke, sometimes broken by a sudden flash: no sound could be heard but the roar of artillery, ceaseless, deep, and deafening. She had passed the night without sleep, and the day without food, and the stupor that now invaded all her faculties seemed like the approach of peace.

Sinking on the ground, and hiding her face with her hands, she resigned the attempt even to think any further, and the prayers that would have burst from her heart she had no longer strength to utter.

Evening approached: a bright autumnal moon broke through the vapours that

had shrouded the isles all day, and this light, by restoring her wandering senses, awoke her sufferings: she viewed it, and wished for darkness again.

It was now night, and nothing had broke the fearful silence all day, when steps were heard on the rock, and four of the rebels were seen by the light of the moon running towards the cottage, with their pikes dyed in blood up to the hand. Armida started from the ground, but she could not speak: their tale was soon told: the king's troops had effected a landing in the isle about noon, though desperately opposed by the rebels, and had, after a dreadful slaughter, nearly reached the centre of it.

The engagement still continued among detached parties, for the ground was too much broken, and the rebels an enemy too wild and tumultuous to be dealt with after the rules of a regular engagement; and Connal, who was still fighting on

foot among the foremost of his men, had dispatched four of them, whom he could ill spare, to conduct Armida from her retreat to one more remote from that where the troops were forcing their way. Armida and her attendant followed them: the narrow path, the trembling precipices, the broken light, and the distant roar of the conflict, had no terrors for her now; once, shuddering at a yell of more than common horror, that broke from the bottom of a glen before the rock they were ascending, she paused—the men demanded the reason of the delay; she pointed to her heart, but could give no answer.

They reached the opposite shore of the isle: here stood the ruins which Armida remembered she had visited with Connal soon after their first meeting; she knew it well, but her parched and burning eyes had not now a tear to give to memory or to passion.

They entered the ruins, and the men pointed out to her the vaults to which she

might retire for safety, in the event of the military approaching. She listened, and then exerting her utmost strength to speak, implored them to return to Connal. The men informed her they had orders not to quit her sight, and reluctant as they were to obey them, she could not prevail on them to leave her.

It was almost midnight, but the conflict had not ceased, and so totally unlike to modern war, that it seemed like the contest of two savage nations in their deserts: there was no array, no regularity, no conducted charge, no disciplined retreat. Except where Connal still maintained his bloody post near the centre of the isle, the rebels were every where broken, and the soldiers pursuing them in detached parties. Every cliff, every glen was the scene of a different action; it was the fight of man with man, the thrust of pike and bayonet hand to hand, the discharge of musket

and pistol at the very breast of the assailant; and this desultory conflict, that extended to every retreat in the isle, and tore all its echoes with the yell of assault, and the groan of death, was more terrible to the fugitives than one decisive and stationary action.

At first it was rather a rout than an engagement, rather a slaughter than a victory, but as the night advanced, the superior knowledge and activity of the rebels in their wild recesses, and the contempt of the military for these fugitive savages, was fatal to multitudes of the former, who pursued their victory too far; and before midnight, though the soldiers claimed the victory, the loss had been nearly equal.

It was two hours since Armida and her attendant, seated on a tomb-stone that rose in the centre of what had once been the aisle of a monastery, listened in vain for a sound of hope or safety.

The men at length leaving her, paced gloomily along the ruined cloisters, striking their pikes against the broken pavement with sullen impatience, and the woman, worn out by fatigue and horror, fell asleep at her feet.

Armida, left alone, looked upward for a moment: the moon was bright in heaven, the grey ruins were tinged with her full but solemn light: there was not a cloud in ether; the breeze scarce waved the foliage that wreathed the shattered walls, and this breathless stillness of nature, contrasting the passions of man, made them seem more formidable. She could scarce believe that amid such scenes fury could be felt, or blood could be shed by man.

She was startled from her reverie by the sound of voices and steps approaching: she recognized the English accent of the soldiers of Wandesford's regiment—they advanced—they would have

passed on, but the rebels observing the fewness of their numbers, in their zeal for vengeance betrayed the charge committed to them, and pursued them instantly.

A sharp contest followed, and the rebels, three of them wounded, retreated to the ruin: the soldiers pursued them, and in a moment Armida saw their bayonets sparkling, and the fire flashing before her eyes. Her terror had not deprived her of recollection, and she attempted to take shelter in the vaults, but her companion, delirious with fear, clung to her with such force that it was impossible to escape, and they sunk on the ground together.

The unfortunate men, whose rashness had betrayed her, now exerted the last remains of life to gather round her, and defend her from the soldiers. Three of them fell almost at her feet, and the soldiers, one of whom knew her, were advancing to seize her.

Horror overcame all her faculties, and for a few moments she remained insensible; but the flash and the conflict so near her allowed her but a short respite, and when she recovered, she saw another arm raised in her defence, whose force could not be mistaken. It was Connal, desperately encountering the soldiers alone, and in this tremendous struggle his more than human figure gave a kind of dignity even to slaughter.

The soldiers had expended their ball, and all whom he had not disabled pressed on him with their bayonets. He had no weapon but the pike of one of the fallen rebels, and with this in his hand, his back to the tomb where Armida had fallen, and his foot planted against a fragment of stone, it seemed easier to lift the building from its base than to make him yield an inch.

Armida gazed on him for a moment bewildered, and scarce believing that a

human being could support such a contest: but a few moments brought the dreadful conviction that he could not sustain it long: she heard his broken respiration; she felt him stagger; the ground trembled with his convulsive movements; the tomb was stained with his blood, and the force of the blows made it flow fast on Armida as she lay almost at his feet, alive only to the horrible idea of seeing him die before her: she called, she shrieked to the soldiers to spare his life, and promised all her wealth to reward them.

Connal cast a look of agony on her, but he had not breath to utter a word; desperate with terror, she fell on her knees, and offered to throw herself on their mercy, if they would spare him.

"I am the daughter of Lord Montclare," she cried; "I will follow you without a struggle: I am kneeling on the ground: I am humbled to the dust.

Hear me, hear me, and save his life ; the daughter of Lord Monclare begs it on her knees."

The men, incensed by Connal's desperate resistance, and determined on his life, closed round their victim.

Armida, driven to frenzy, looked round for a weapon to defend his life or end her own, and at that moment could she have wielded a pike her desperation would have driven it into the breast of the boldest of his assailants. Suddenly the wild yell of the rebels struck her ear; she echoed it involuntarily with a cry as wild, and a party of them, whom Connal almost fatally for himself had left far behind flying to her assistance, poured in to his rescue, and Connal, who had exhausted his utmost force in the last blow he had aimed, fell into the arms of the first who advanced to defend him. No conflict followed, for the rebels gathered in terror round their leader, whom they had never seen prostrate before, and

the soldiers resting on their arms in astonishment at their being spared by a number who could have destroyed them in a moment, but who seemed alive only to the fate of one man, after lingering for some time, gazing and doubtful of their senses, retired in safety.

Armida's senses wandered; sight and hearing failed her, though her recollection remained, and she seemed to struggle through mist and darkness for a clear perception of her danger. With an effort that suffering alone can make, she raised herself, and threw back her dishevelled hair to look round her: Connal, pale, bloody, and exhausted, was kneeling before her.

"You are safe, you are alive," he cried, but not in a voice of tenderness or joy: "now let me begone."

Armida, unable to speak, attempted to hold him; he broke from her, but the speechless agony of her look made him pause.

"Whither would you go?" said Armida, faintly.

"Back to my men to perish with them; back to the brave men whom I deserted, whom I left spending their blood for me, while I fled from them—yes, fled like a coward, at the very moment when another effort would have saved them from destruction. I saw a party of soldiers taking this direction: I knew they must discover you—no human heart could hold the conflict of mine—I trembled, and turned my back—you are safe, but I paid a price for it I would not pay for worlds—my men have seen me fly."

All Armida's sufferings were nothing compared to the bitterness of this moment, when, for the first time, Connal's lips reproached her; but her fear overcame every other feeling, and she still clung to him, though she did not dare to supplicate his stay.

He turned as she trembled at his feet;

his pale cheek for a moment burned with shame, anger, and love: "Are you my enemy too?" he cried: "would you erase my name from the book of life of the brave, and condemn me to eternal infamy?"

Armida, unable to bear the intolerable lustre of his eyes, that blazed with the agony of his heart and frame, released her hold, but as he rushed from her, she called to him to kill her before he went.

"You are safe," cried Connal; "the men who fled after their leader are round you—I am not fit to defend you: 'till I have recovered the post I deserted I am unworthy to draw a sword—an infant or a dastard might win you from me." Then springing forward with the enthusiasm of despair, "I will offer this last sacrifice to my country," he exclaimed, "though the temple is in ruins, and the priest himself the victim."

The energy of Armida's feelings rose above the pitch of nature: she followed him, and kneeling made a vow to heaven, that if his life was saved in this last conflict, she would suffer herself to be conducted any where that would save him the distraction of her presence amid his trials.

A smile of gratitude and joy lightened for a moment Connal's distracted features, and this smile was an omen of victory.

His men, few, faint and sore, maintained a dreadful fight on the hill where he had left them; but when he returned it was doubtful. His mind, relieved from the only burden that could subdue its energies, seemed almost independent of the aid of his worn and wounded frame: no mortal force could now make him waver or shrink, and the soldiers, harassed by the continued actions of the day, and feeling the extent of their loss far beyond

what they had imagined, retreated to the shore with the intent to quit the isles by day-break, unless a powerful reinforcement arrived.

Connal seized this moment to commit Armida to the care of Desmond: he had not a moment to deliberate where he should conduct her, and Desmond, whom nothing but this commission could divide from his brother, was compelled to think for them both.

A short and agitated council was held while the boat was preparing to convey her from the only part of the shore that was not filled with the king's troops, and the increasing light hurried her departure, while it was yet possible to depart without being observed or intercepted.

Desmond, with a sigh to the memory of Ines, proposed St. Austin's house as a retreat, till Connal's fate was decided.

Armida, to whom all places were alike

if banished from him, made no opposition.

"Speak, my love," said Connal, "will you go to St. Austin: speak that I may hear the sound of your voice once—once more."

She tried to answer him, but her utterance was choaked, and faintly holding out her hand, she tried to press his in token of confidence. The burning tears that dropt on it, the damp forehead and speechless lips it was pressed to, the broken and suffocating sobs that were breathed over it, called on her for a last exertion of courage, and she forced a smile on her convulsed features, as she leaned on Desmond for support.

"May this retreat prove more propitious to you than to your ill-fated sister!" murmured Desmond as he drew her away.

Connal bore her in his arms through the surf, and as he placed her in the boat, their bosoms, so long agitated by misfortune, now locked in a last agonizing em-

brace, partook at once of the extremes of anguish and joy.

Desmond's withered heart afforded one tear to this sight, and the men, resting on their oars, forgot their own danger as they gazed on the lovers.

"The morning is breaking," said Desmond; "we must be gone."

Connal leaped from the boat, and when he reached the shore, the agony of his heart forbidding even a word, a movement, a look to her parting figure, he knelt on the ground, and his locked hands, his quivering lips, his dishevelled hair, spoke that intenseness of devotion in which the spirit loses sight of every thing but heaven, and the object it offers to it.

Armida gazed on him for a moment : she felt her spirits exalted by this humiliation that implied so much confidence, and waving her hand to him, she cried, "We shall meet again."

"In heaven we shall," said Connal,

mentally, rising to take a last glimpse of the receding boat as it disappeared, and he proceeded alone to his desperate station.

Fragments of letters from Rosine to Albert St. Austin, her uncle.

“ Dearest uncle, Armida is here—she came last night : though I see her before me, I can scarce believe my eyes, and I am still so agitated by her avowal, that I can hardly give you a legible account of it. Since your journey to Roscommon I have retired early every night, for the neighbourhood is still so much disturbed, that I dreaded the servants being out late. Last night I sat reading in my own room later than usual, when I thought I heard steps on the lawn, and the servants refusing entrance to someone. I was terrified at first, but the application for admission was so peaceable, that at last I took courage to open the window : the night was dark, and I could scarcely distinguish two

figures at the door—I spoke to them, but received no answer: one of the servants then came up to tell me that a man was below, whose voice they thought they knew, but who refused to enter unless I admitted him: this appeal removed my fears, and I went down and opened the door: I attempted to speak, but they passed me and hurried to my room, where they had seen lights burning. I followed them wondering, though not afraid: when I entered the room, one of the figures had sunk into a chair, and thrown off a thick mantle in which she was wrapt: the light fell full on her face—it was Armida; alas! how pale and changed she was. The whole day they had been coasting among the islands in an open boat, to escape the military, and when they landed in the evening, they concealed themselves among the rocks, till night-fall made it safe for them to venture out. They did not reach the house till midnight: what must have been her suffer-

ings! yet, perhaps, those which she speaks of are the least.

“ Desmond, in spite of our supplications, left us before morning broke. She is now safe under this roof, if that can be called safety where life is suspended on the fate of another.”

* * * * *

“ This morning, when I view her more steadily, I perceive the alteration of last night proceeded rather from fatigue and terror. She is pale indeed, but there is an energy in her figure, a character in her expression, and even a glow on her cheek at times brighter than the tint of youth, or health, or happiness. I look with terror on that dazzling and frightful beauty that derives its lustre from passions too powerful for the frame, and almost makes you see the spirit shining through its fragile and transparent vesture. Her mind is more changed than her figure; she has no ambition, no imagination left; she talks calmly of

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her past misfortunes, and of the prospects that await her, but she never speaks of Connal: I mentioned his name to-day, and I never shall forget her look, or the action with which she pressed her hand on her heart, as if to recover the blow that name had given her. Alas! what changes do those who have even seen little of life witness in all that once formed its ornament and delight.

“When I beheld her first all was meridian brightness around her: no mortal ever appeared so fortunate or so brilliant: no eye could discover a speck in the orb, but where her proud sensibility cast its shade for a moment.

“I see her now by night, pensive, shadowy, wan; and the lustre that yet hangs round her figure seems like that of the melancholy planet, by whose light grief loves to wander, and passion to weep.”

* * * * *

“Yet, it is not of her ruined mind, or her fading beauty she ever speaks or

thinks, and this total self-resignation, this devotion to another, and that other so unfortunate, gives her a charm she wanted in her days of happiness and splendour."

* * * * *

"I have been making inquiries: dreadful fears are entertained for the fate of Connal: I know not what his present plans are, whether to retain possession of the islands, or to break through the forces stationed on the shore, and regain the mountains, or disperse themselves through the country. The emigration of such a number to America is almost impossible, and it is equally so that they can remain in safety here: in either case, her absence will leave every power unimpeded, but I fear their utmost exertion will never be able to accomplish their meeting once more in security."

* * * * *

"What must be the character of this

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unfortunate man, when the most loyal subjects in the country have been heard to express a wish that he might escape ; but the implacability of Wandesford, his interest, and his representations to government, leave no hope, though they cannot extinguish compassion."

* * * * *

"How I have been terrified: Lady Kilcarrick has been here: since Gabriella's misconduct, and her disappointment about her, her sole delight is, I think, in inflicting misery on all she can. By some means she has procured intelligence from the servants, with the meanest of whom she would submit to converse to gratify her curiosity, and she came to tell me she had heard of the arrival of two persons at the house the preceding night at a late hour, and in a very mysterious manner. When she found that neither threats nor importunity could extort any thing from me, she even attempted to

search the house ; I prevented her almost by force, and she departed at last with a torrent of abuse.

“ My terror for Armida carried me beyond myself ; I called up the servants, and with as much violence as if I had power to execute my threats, I told them I would be their ruin, I would bring them to want a morsel of bread, if I ever found one of them had disclosed the event of last night : they promised secrecy, but how can I expect it from them. Dearest uncle come to me as soon as possible : I am not able to encounter these scenes alone.”

* * * * *

“ All is over : there has been an engagement between the military and the rebels : it was decisive : the rebels are defeated : hundreds have fallen, and hundreds more are prisoners ; Wandesford himself is wounded, and Connal and Desmond have perished.”

“ Great God ! what is life : I tremble

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at my own existence, and at the misfortunes that disfigure mortality : I am sick of life : who shall escape, when Armida has encountered more than death : she whom I once regarded as a being above the claims and cares of humanity. How affection can pervert the heart, when I, whose very existence depends on the existing state of the country, listen almost in despair to the fate of a rebel."

* * * * *

"Hours have elapsed since I traced those lines : I attempt to proceed ; but my fingers stiffen with horror when I take up my pen. The rebels are flying in all directions ; some of them passed within a mile of the house, with the soldiers pursuing them : I hear the firing this moment, and the light of the burning cabins on the heath is increasing dismally as the evening grows darker.

"Two women, whose sons perished yesterday, brought the first intelligence : poor wretches, their screams as they

rushed into the house still ring in my ears. It was impossible to prevent Armida from hearing them; she rushed forward, and though I almost knelt to them to be silent, or at least to cease those horrid cries that told their tale before a word was uttered, she heard it all. Alas! it must be true that Connal is no more, for while one was left to stand by him he never would retreat."

• • • • •

"We have been tortured with reports all day: Connal is sometimes dead, and sometimes a prisoner, and sometimes hiding in a cavern on the shore, with one surviving follower. My only consolation is that Armida is insensible of all.

"Since the first intelligence arrived every gleam of reason has disappeared. Her mind, wound up to the last pitch of hope, has broke, and never will the chord vibrate again.

"Oh God! what the sufferers must

feel, when a witness like me would almost escape by death from what I am compelled to undergo.

“ I am writing beside her bed : alas ! can this be Armida : that mind, whose powers might have enlightened or governed society is prostrated and broken ; that form, whose undulations might have suggested ideas to a creating spirit for the inmates of a new ethereal world of beauty, lies convulsed and distorted before me : and that voice, whose resources once tasked the art of harmony to find difficulties for, can only utter screams of despair and agony.”

* * * * *

“ Whatever be your engagements, I implore you to come home immediately : I cannot deal with these events alone : I am amid violent and dangerous people, whom I have neither powers nor passions to resist. She has been torn from me this moment. Lady Montclare and her

wretched husband broke in here this evening. They insisted on seeing Armida : I had no means of opposing them.

“ Lady Montclare loaded me with reproaches, and I appealed in vain to the humanity of the worthless O’Morven, who seemed to come only like one of his wife’s attendants. Alas ! that such a father should survive, and such sons should perish.

“ I entreated them at last not to remove her in her present state ; but her mother, without heeding me, ordered her to be lifted into the carriage. I saw her borne away like a corse : she was cold and senseless, and in the fulness of my heart, I wished she might never revive to wretchedness.

“ Dear uncle, return instantly, I dread this treacherous and daring woman : I am convinced she has some other plan in agitation. It is well known that her other daughter was sacrificed to her arts and to her violence : she regards no hu-

man being but as the agent of her ambition, and even Armida's dreadful state will be no protection from her mother."

* * * * *

"Two days of solitude and terror—I have not had a line from you—I cannot hear any thing from the castle. While I look on its dark towers through the frowns of evening, my heart sinks within me.

"I know not whether Armida is alive or dead: the country is all in tumult: I kept the doors locked day and night till yesterday, when I was obliged to admit some soldiers who were billeted here. I trembled at their sight: perhaps one of them decided the fate of Connal."

* * * * *

"Connal's fate is yet unknown: there is still hope, if that can be called hope where life appears to have more terrors than death. Two hours after the soldiers were removed, Desmond arrived: famine, fatigue, and wounds, have made

him almost a spectre. He was left for dead in the last engagement, and knew not how he escaped or recovered. He has wandered about since, not to seek safety, for he wished to die, but he wished first to see Armida, and communicate the hopes that are still felt for Connal's life. Desmond is certain he did not perish in the last engagement: at a late hour on that dreadful day he was still fighting. Those who saw him later say he was still alive, and his body has not yet been found. Many have been apprehended on suspicion of concealing him, but if alive he has hitherto escaped their search. Alas! he whom Wandesford pursues cannot long escape.

“Desmond is gone to the castle, determined to see Armida. I implored him to consult his safety by flight or concealment, while the soldiers were in the neighbourhood: he listened to me with a smile of desperation.

“I only lived for Connal,” said he,

‘and now all I can do is to die for him.’
How terrible is this contrasted union of early youth with a broken heart. Even Connal and Armida, tempest-shaken as they are, scarce present such a melancholy image as this young green branch withered in its vernal prime. Desmond, you are worthy of such a brother, but you were worthy of a better fate. In early youth, I already seem to myself to have lived too long to witness what I have done. Misfortunes antedate experience, and existence protracted for ever could hardly sustain such a loss again as it has done in Connal and Desmond : how much virtue and valour has perished with them ! what genius and passion in Armida ! what softness and innocence in Ines ! I feel them as already lost ; and the storm that is now howling through the sky seems to me as if it were passing over their graves. Alone, at midnight, the past full of misfortune, and the future of terror, I tremble with visionary fear, though I

am writing to you—what can this mean? A messenger from the castle, to require me to be present at Armida's marriage—Armida's marriage! and at midnight! I have read over the lines till I am almost giddy: it is her hand. This invitation to festivity at such a time, and from such a hand, seems to me more terrible than all I feared in the indefinite range of my gloomiest thoughts. I cannot but think something fearful is at hand. The prophecy of a heart inspired by grief seldom errs. The messenger waits for me, and I go to this marriage with a heavier heart than if I had been summoned to follow her to the grave."

CHAP. III.

ON the dreadful evening of the engagement Connal was left alone on the heath. He looked round him: a few of the rebels still were seen on the dim verge of the heath, as if they were flying to hide themselves in the shades of the night. The sudden change from the tumult of fight to silence, solitude, and darkness, was terrible, and for a moment he stood spell-bound and unconscious of existence on the spot. He called on his men: his voice was echoed from the hills, but no one answered.

"Desmond! Desmond!" he cried; but Desmond was lying in a glen far distant, wounded and weltering in blood.

A thrill of anguish mixed with pride darted its last impulse through Connal's breast, and he exclaimed aloud:

“Is there not one brave man left, who will plant his foot by mine, and perish by my side?” No voice answered, no foot approached. Connal threw down his sword on the heath. “All is lost!” broke from his lips: and the winds that whistled on the heath seemed to murmur back the sound—“All is lost!”

“Yet, yet there is one to be saved,” he exclaimed, as the thought of the poor old maniac in his cell rushed on his mind.

He retired from the field but slowly, for he expected to meet an enemy at every step. The heath was deserted, and he entered the rocky path that led to the glen where his grandfather was confined. On his entrance to it he started to avoid treading on a body that lay before his feet. He advanced again, and beheld a number scattered along the path: a party of rebels had contested that pass in the morning, and every man had fallen where he fought. “And these all perished for me!” said Connal, pausing.

Impelled by horror he sprung through this glen of death, and descended through the chasm that opened on the shore: all was dark, cold, and solitary. The echo of his step was the only sound, as he crossed the valley: it seemed like the warrior's grave, when the warrior's struggle was past.

As he hurried on with a beating heart, the roar of the ocean burst on his ear, and the wind rushing through this narrow pass seemed to swell to a storm the accents of horror and death he had lately heard rose on the gale, as if the spirits of those that had fallen were ascending on its wings in their flight to eternity: he stopped, and looked upward: the rocks were darkening above, and the ocean bursting at his feet—nature, as well as man, seemed arming against him. His mind, pressed with many cares and sufferings, began to fail, and he imagined that the spirits of those he had loved and destroyed hung on the clouds that black-

ened over his head. Desmond reproached him with his blasted hopes, and Armida reminded him of the extinguished lustre of her destiny, her talents, and her passion. He listened to these sounds of fancy, till, almost maddening with their terror, he turned with flashing eye, and dishevelled hair, to answer them. The wind sunk: he paused, and heard only the throbbing of his heart. Ashamed of his weakness, yet shrinking from its recurrence, he hurried to the habitation of the maniac.

His retreat was so secluded that no one, even in that day of ravage, had reached it; and Connal embarking with him, and one wounded rebel, who had sought shelter in the hut in an open boat, exerted the last remains of his strength to row to the shore before the soldiers quitted the island, and overspread it. He reached it before morning, and they gained the summit of a rock, where they stood aloof from their enemies in safety and despair.

Connal, who had carried his grandfather in his arms up this almost inaccessible steep, sunk exhausted on the ground on which he laid his helpless burden; and their companion, who had dragged his wounded limbs after them, died at their feet the moment he surmounted the acclivity. Even Connal's faculties and frame sunk for a time under his toil, and he fell into a sleep, whose stupefaction resembled that of death, till roused by the firing of the soldiers, who had landed on the coast, and were pursuing a few wretches who had escaped from the islands, he started up, and looked round for some cave to hide in for the day.

Evening came on: no step of friend or enemy approached. A cold sleet, drifting with a stormy wind, beat into the nook where they had shrunk: the bare stone supported the emaciated limbs of the maniac. Connal had in vain stripped himself of every garment he could spare to spread under him: drenched with wet,

they afforded no warmth to his chilled frame. He had in vain searched the rock for one drop of water to quench the burning thirst of frenzy: he returned from his hopeless wandering, and passed the whole of that dreadful night in listening to the moan of hunger, and the scream of madness.

Famine drove him out the next day in search of that relief, without which it was now impossible to live. His knowledge of the country enabled him to avoid every place probably frequented by the soldiers, but it confined him to those where no inhabitant was to be found, and no food could be procured. At length he saw a cabin on the side of the mountain he was wandering on, and, desperate from want, hurried towards it. An elderly woman was sitting at the door: she was in rags, her eyes were wild, and the stillness of her posture had no alliance with the wandering fierceness of her look.

Connal, almost insensible of her ap-

pearance, approached, and addressing her in Irish, implored some food for a famishing relative. The woman gazed at him for some time, and then said, in a hurried voice :

“ Yes, yes, I have food enough—enough for you and me: come in, come in, and let us enjoy it together.”

Connal followed her into the cabin. On a heap of straw lay the body of a young man, whom Connal remembered to have fallen beside him in the engagement of the preceding day.

“ There, there,” said the woman, with the eloquence of despair, pointing to the corpse, “ there he lies: you have laid him there. There is the feast I promised you; you may devour him yourself, for that is all you have left me to give you. There, gnaw his bones, but leave his heart to his mother.” And with a yell of agony, she threw herself on the body.

Connal flew from the cabin with the swiftness of lightning; but faster than

he flew her curses followed him, and still the dreadful cry, multiplied a thousand-fold by the mountain echoes, rung in his ears—"Woe, woe to the bloody house of O'Morven! The curse of a broken-hearted mother on the bloody house of O'Morven!"

When he had got to a distance, he sunk on his knees on the earth, and the prayer of deprecation, "Not unto me, oh, heaven! not unto me," burst from his heart, but his parched lips could not utter the sounds: yet, dreadful as his reception was in this house of death, he dreaded still more to return, and see a parent die of hunger on his bed of stone.

"Yesterday," he thought, "I commanded an army, and to-day I pray for the sight of one human being who will give me a morsel of bread, and pray in vain." As he spoke, a boy, running with the speed of a mountaineer, passed him.

Connal called after him, but the boy

ran faster, and when Connal pursued him, falling on his knees, implored him to spare his life. "Do I look like a murderer then?" said Connal, retreating; and for the first time, his eye glancing on his own figure, he ceased to wonder at the child's terror. Almost naked, stained with blood (for his exertions had made his wounds bleed afresh), ghastly with famine, slaughter, and despair, even the grace and dignity of his figure appeared like the wild grandeur of a maniac, and added terror to his appearance. But the sound of his voice, which not even despair could divest of harmony, dispelled the fears of the boy, and he informed him he was the son of a cottager on the mountain, and was sent on a message to young O'Morven at the castle from the house below (pointing in the direction where St. Austin's house stood), as none of the servants from that house would be admitted by Lady Montclare.

"Young O'Morven!" said Connal, in

amazement, "is Desmond at the castle? Is he alive and safe?"

"He is," said the boy; "I saw him to-day."

"Oh! heaven has not deserted us," cried Connal, the tears bursting from his seared eyes.

"While Desmond has life, we shall not be let to perish.

"Fly to the castle, and tell him his grandfather is starving in a cave on this bleak mountain. Do not let him expose his safety by coming in search of us: let him but send us food; and, oh! implore him to send it soon, for in an hour it may arrive too late."

The boy promised, and Connal returned to his dreary retreat; but unable to enter it without relief, he stood at the entrance armed with the only weapon the rock afforded—the fragment of a gigantic ash that grew in one of its fissures. All day he strained his eyes over the distant heath for the return of the messenger, till his

heart sickening with expectation, and his sight dim with weakness, and unable to penetrate the gathering darkness, he sunk into the cave, and raising his grandfather's head on his breast, felt that the pangs that now tore it would be the last. A quick, light step approached. "Ah! that is Desmond's light foot," said Connal, starting from the ground. It was the boy.

After waiting for some hours, he was told that O'Morven did not believe the message was from his brother. "How can I convince him?" said Connal: "whoever sent the message he must at least have known required the relief he supplicated. I could not have trifled thus with the misery of famine." And his anguish for a moment overpowered his confidence in Desmond. "I have no means left of satisfying him but this," said he, and with his blood he scrawled on a piece of slate the name of Connal, and gave it to the boy, imploring him to

deliver it, if possible, to Desmond himself. The boy looked terrified at this second commission, and then confessed that two men had followed him over the mountain, and were now approaching the cave. "We are betrayed," said Connal, and the force of a giant seemed to nerve his arm, as he sprung forward to guard his parent's dying moment from insult. "They shall feel that the blows of a famished man are as fierce as the hunger that is tearing his vitals: better to starve on this black rock than to perish on their gibbets." Two men approached, but they came with no hostile intention: they were men, who, though strictly loyal, felt that dignified compassion for Connal which his character had inspired, even in his enemies, and conjecturing his situation, they had wandered all day on the mountain in quest of him, and at length discovered his retreat by pursuing his messenger.

Connal, unable to distinguish their

figures or their intention, placed himself at the entrance, and as they advanced, he exclaimed, "I am O'Morven! Let him that is reckless of life advance another step to this cave." The men, urged by the necessity of their own safety, for Connal, exhausted as he was, could have crushed them to dust, eagerly explained their motive for intruding on his retreat, and offered to lead his grandfather and him to one of their cabins, where he would be safe from pursuit or suspicion. "I know not what to believe, or whom to trust," said Connal, after a long pause; "but it is so long since I have heard even the language of humanity, that I cannot resist it. Lead me where you will, but remember that this hand, though unarmed, can deal with twice its odds, and even were it withered this moment, there is another that can reach those that oppress the defenceless and the trusting."

The men with assurances of fidelity entered the cave, and when they beheld

the deplorable state of O'Morven and his grandfather, they shed tears of grief and indignation, and one of them could not forbear expressions of resentment at the abuses of principle and habit by which such a man as Connal had been driven to extremes so horrible. "Hold," said Connal, his inextinguishable soul flashing from his eyes: "not a word against that venerable wretch: his prejudices, his errors are to me as hallowed as his white hairs, and like them, if they are torn up, the blood will follow." His spirit, even amid ruin and wretchedness, awed the very men upon whom his existence depended, and they silently prepared to remove the old man from the stones on which they found him stretched, but they viewed each other with looks that intimated their help had come too late.

It was night when they quitted the rock, for the soldiers were still about the country, and his exhausted state rendering it impossible to remove to the distance

of their own habitations, they placed him in one of the huts in which the shepherds watch the cattle during summer, and which was now deserted. Food was brought to them ; but the deadly sickness which Connal felt at the sight of it made him unable to taste a morsel, and it was with the utmost difficulty he could prevent his grandfather from devouring, with the ravenous appetite of madness, a quantity that would have destroyed him. He then hurried the men away, lest their being absent from their homes at night might expose them to danger on his account ; thanking heaven for the luxury of straw and a draught of cold water, he sunk into a slumber.

On the preceding day Desmond had arrived at the castle at a late hour in the evening.

It was almost dark ; but he could distinguish, as he approached, something like a procession issuing from the gate, and winding down the rock on which he stood

He advanced with a boding apprehension for which he could not account: the procession stopped for a moment, and he discovered it was a funeral.

He attempted to ask whose it was ; but his voice failed, and he was compelled to lean for support on the person of whom he inquired.

The man, who was one of the bearers, did not recognize his figure in the shade, and he answered abruptly it was the funeral of O'Morven, who had been so lately married to Lady Montclare.

"My father !" cried Desmond, falling breathless into the arms of his informer.

The report that one of O'Morven's sons was among them spread through the attendants ; but there was no one there that would betray him.

He was borne back to the castle by some of them, who thought they might as well have suffered his corse-like figure to accompany his father.

Lady Montclare, from the window of her apartment, beheld him by the torches which the bearers had now lit, and at that moment the plan which she had been revolving ever since she had got Armida into her power appeared for the first time practicable.

Trembling in her castle, this unhappy victim of her own arts looked round, and beheld the ruin she had brought on all connected with her without procuring safety for herself.

By her constant irritation of Wandesford against Connal he had been impelled to that treachery which had driven the latter into rebellion and ruin. By her want of confidence in Armida she had been urged to follow the desperate fortunes of Connal.

Her arts had driven Desmond and Ines to destruction. Her agent, Morosini, had perished in the execution of her plans ; and the wretched O'Morven, wearied by her violence, and terrified by

her crimes, had, after one of the furious conflicts with which their short and unhappy marriage was attended, burst a blood-vessel, and expired in her sight.

Yet amid all this wide-spreading mischief she felt that almost all she had dreaded were either removed or no longer capable of molesting her.

Wandesford, intent only on vengeance, had probably forgot that such a being as Endymion once existed.

Connal, a hunted fugitive, whose life was forfeited to the laws, could inspire no fears. Her husband was no more, and Desmond, whose knowledge of her secret she could not doubt, was at length in her power, the last and only being she feared ; and the plan that she now conceived, atrocious and wild as it was, seemed probable from the moment she beheld him. She hastened to attend him in person : she scattered rich and reviving essences over him with her own hands, and the

lifeless appearance of him whom she remembered so lately warm in youth and beauty, a blooming husband, and almost parent, deterred her not from sacrificing the remains of his doubtful existence to her plans the moment it was restored.

As he revived she assumed that aspect of sober and matron grief that she believed would conciliate his feelings; and the moment he was able to hear or to understand her, she commenced the development of her scheme.

Desmond at first revolted from it with horror: his reason was outraged by its improbability, and his feelings were torn by its violence; but he was no opponent for the woman he had to deal with. Her sophistry, her eloquence, and her passion, were alternately exerted. The opposition of his reason she overcame by evidences that seemed irresistible, and the conflict of his feelings she stilled by an appeal still more powerful. He yielded at length,

and she hurried to Armida, to subdue the only resistance to her purpose which she still feared.

Armida, whose reason was just sufficiently restored to comprehend her meaning, but who, in her delirious terror, grasped at any thing that promised immunity from the last and only evil she dreaded, submitted even more speedily than Desmond; and Lady Montclare, exulting in her success, and unmoved by the sufferings of her victims, set out herself on foot at that late hour in quest of a confidential agent in the neighbourhood.

She was returning alone: it was almost midnight; but, occupied by her own thoughts, she heeded neither solitude nor darkness, till, as she was ascending the rocky terrace that bounded the castle on the sea-side, a figure started forwards and crossed her path. She looked up, and screamed with undissembled terror. It was Connal, and his figure, wild, wasted, almost supernatural, seemed in

terrible alliance with the roar of the wind that raved on the rocks and the pale flashes of autumnal lightning that from time to time revealed and obscured it.

"Connal!" cried Lady Montclare, shrinking from his look, though half its terrific expression had not encountered her.

"Yes, Connal! the wretch whom your crimes, combined with those of others, have reduced to a spectre that blasts your sight."

"Do you forget my rank?—Do you forget my sex?" said Lady Montclare, trying to assume a dignity of which her vices had deprived her.

"Yes, I have forgot every thing: I have lived to forget the laws that bind man to reverence woman, or to love his species. Wretched woman! shrink not from me: injured as I am, for the meanest of your sex I would yet shed the last drop of blood that is left in these veins: injured as I am, I would shed it even for

you. If you shrink from my sight thus, how will you bear what I must say to you before we part, for bear it you shall."

"Oh! heavens!" said Lady Montclare, struggling in terror, "do you mean to murder me?"

"Yes; I mean to pierce you to the very heart, if you have one.—Look at me," he cried, holding her at arm's length from his figure, while she shuddered at its dark unearthly majesty; "look at me! I am stained with blood, I am squalid with rags, I am scarce human in my form; yet your beautiful, your high-born Armida, will sit under the shadow of a gibbet one day with this felon-corse in her arms:—and will your pride support you then?"

"Merciful heaven! deliver me from this maniac," cried Lady Montclare.

"Yes, I am a maniac:—your arts and crimes have made me one. 'Tis you have planned this cursed marriage. I have borne much; but this is more than man

can bear. I thought last night when I watched a dying parent on straw in a hovel that heaven had exhausted its power to punish ; but heaven has punished my presumption. Armida, she has deserted me : she who never shrunk in war, and want, and misfortune ; she who almost fought by my side : and what have I done to her !—My sufferings have wearied her. 'Tis you, 'tis you who have driven her to this. The arts of hell have been practised on her, and you were their agent : you ! wretched woman, destroyer of your children, you !”

The terrified wretch sunk on her knees, and with the most horrid perjuries attested heaven that this marriage was Armida's own choice, and that her influence had never been exerted to accomplish it.

“ I would not believe an angel that descended from heaven to swear it. Bring me to her sight : I will believe no words but her's. I have parted with life, and

honour, and happiness, and my heart was never withered by a fear, my lips never breathed a murmur; but from Armida I will not be torn by mortal hand. I will see her this night, this moment, though you, and Wandesford, and Satan stood to oppose me."

"You shall see her," said Lady Montclare, who in the midst of terror had made this demand subservient to her plans; "you shall see her this night, and hear from her own lips what I have told you."

"I fear you," said Connal, musing, "I fear you are too much for me. I cannot penetrate your purposes: would I could penetrate your heart; but the attempt is desperate. Think, think, unnatural woman, before you sacrifice your other child, what is the wretched toy you are thus purchasing with your soul: with all your pride and wealth, you tremble before the most wretched of his species this moment; and how will you

abide when your heart shall be laid as bare as this bosom?"

"I can give no other security," said Lady Montclare, unmoved at this appeal.

"Go," said Connal, releasing her, "I trust you not; but remember I will see Armida:" and he stretched himself on a rock before the castle-gate: she implored him to seek some concealment, but he listened to her with a disdainful smile, and at length she retired.

It was now that she was compelled to put forth all her strength to prevent the consequences of this interview, for she saw too well the fixed despair of Connal to hope it could be avoided. She hastened to Armida.

The same arguments that had prevailed on her to submit to the marriage were employed to make her consent to this interview without disclosing her motives. Armida's resolution sunk before the thought of meeting Connal, and on her knees she implored her mother to spare

her this last trial : but Lady Montclare believing that when this interview was over she had nothing more to dread, exhausted all her art to obtain it, and succeeded.

Armida and Connal met :—for two hours that they remained together Lady Montclare endured almost the punishment due to her crimes, from the apprehension that Armida's constancy might fail. At length she heard the door open : she flew from her apartment, she saw Connal depart with a firm step, and without one reverted look ; and Armida approached with a calmness of aspect that terrified her, for her guilty conscience was alarmed by every thing. She would have spoken to her, but Armida waved her hand with an expression that would not be resisted, and the smile that divided her pale lips had more terror for her guilty parent than the loudest reproaches.

Connal returned to the hovel where the corse of his grandfather had lain since he expired the night before ;

and so deep was the stupefaction that had invaded his mind and senses since the last interview with Armida, that it was not till after he had entered the hut he saw it was filled with the family who had sheltered him, and who were in despair.

During his absence, the soldiers who were in search of him had broken into the cottage, and convinced of his having been harboured there set it on fire, and the wretched family, half naked, fled for their lives to seek shelter in the hovel which had protected the O'Morvens. The despair of the father, whose son had been seized by the soldiers to extort information from him, the cries of the children, and the delirious shriek of the mother, who imagined she still saw her cabin on fire, and incessantly repeated, "Fire! fire! my husband and children in the flames!" burst all at once on the eyes and ears of Connal.

He stood for a moment gazing on them:

the situation in which he beheld them required not a word to explain it : he paused, and then grasping the wretched father's hand, said calmly, " Your son shall be restored to you ; I will be his ransom," and quitted the hovel without another word.

It was now midnight : he set out alone to surrender himself to Wandesford : he paused for a moment, but the cries that seemed to pursue him made him spring forward.

" Nature is weary of me," said he, as he stood alone under the black cope of a starless night : " I have nothing more to do or suffer. Nothing remains for me but the last struggle ; and what will that be compared to what I have been suffering for years of my life, and almost every day of those years. Armida ! and you have deserted me : deserted me when I had torn the last nerves of my heart to place you in safety, and at a distance. Your lips could not pronounce the words,

but your eyes told what the oaths of all mankind could not have made me believe. To the unfortunate their fate appears the result of mystery, of derangement: I could hardly believe it was Armida I saw: perhaps my senses have failed—they will soon be restored. The greatest of all mysteries will shortly be developed: no deception will blind Wandesford when he sees his victim in his power. I cannot summon the strength I wish to meet my last conflict with: if I think of her I shall tremble like a coward, and my enemies will believe it the fear of death. I will pause till I have forgot her, if that be possible.”

He threw himself on the ground for a moment, but the thoughts of the unfortunate family rushed on his mind. He sprung from the ground, and a feeling of indignation warmed his breast as he exclaimed: “And I escaped from war, and peril, and famine, to fall at last by the falsehood of a woman: and in the arms

of her young bridegroom she will not even drop a tear on the grave of the man who lived only for her, and when he could live for her no longer, died."

Wandesford, though it was past midnight when he heard that Connal had arrived at his quarters to surrender himself, started from his bed with joy. He dismissed the soldier who brought him the intelligence, and walked up and down his room to deliberate how he should treat his prisoner. The debate ended in the most diabolical and unmanly vengeance: it was not from any fixed political principle, or a view of the dangers with which Connal's perverted education and heroic passions menaced his country, that Wandesford had pursued him with such hostility; his feeling was personal hatred, and his object the vengeance of an assassin. He did not put him to death, for he wished his sufferings to survive beyond death: similar punishments were

into the heard Diamond distinctly

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common in the unhappy times of Ireland. He ordered his men to give him five hundred lashes under pretence of his refusing information of concealed rebels; and to dismiss him if he survived their infliction: surrounded and overpowered, Connal submitted to what he knew it would be vain to resist; he hoped they would have ended their torture by death, but after a mockery of questions to which they knew he would give no answer, he was thrust out, and drawing over his mangled frame a cloak which one of them in humanity had given, he sunk down beneath the gallows on which the son of the man whose life he had hoped to rescue with his own had been hung that evening.

It was late on that eventful night when Rosine, full of terror and astonishment, arrived at the castle. The servants seemed surprised at seeing her, but Armida, who had grown imperious beyond her mother's

power of management, insisted on her presence, and Lady Montclare had no pretext for refusing. From the messenger who had come for her, and whom she repeatedly questioned during her short journey, she could learn nothing, for he knew only that Armida was to be married that night, and that the castle was all in a tumult of preparation.

Rosine, when she entered the hall, found herself unable to proceed another step, and she retired into a small apartment which she remembered well, while the servant went to announce her arrival to Armida. The room was empty, but a door was open to an adjacent apartment where lights were burning, and from which she heard the sound of voices: at first she did not distinguish them, and her weakness left her no power of retiring when she did.

After a long debate, which the emotion of the speakers rendered almost inarticulate she heard Desmond distinctly exclaim,

“Marry the object of my brother’s love! the woman devoted to him, and to him alone! there is incest in the very thought.”

She could not hear Lady Montclare’s reply, but she thought from the expression of “Connal’s life,” that occurred so often in it, that he submitted from some fear that threatened it. A pause ensued, and Desmond then in a voice broken with agony exclaimed: “I—I, who was the husband of her sister!”

Lady Montclare then audibly reminded him that the religion of her family being catholic, a dispensation had already been procured for his being the husband of two sisters: a long silence followed, but the opportunity for reflexion which it afforded Rosine was in vain: bewildered and distracted, she could not form a conjecture with regard to what she had heard, or what she was to witness. The marriage of Desmond and Armida seemed to throw a mist over her faculties, and

when the servant returned to conduct her to Armida, she followed him as she would the phantom of a dream.

The apartments of Armida, splendidly illuminated, and lavishly decorated with the brilliant monuments of her former talents, increased her wonder, and the silent and lifeless beauty of the statues and paintings as she moved among them, and felt the recollections excited by these well-known objects, made her feel as if she was entering the regions of the dead. As she traversed the apartments in a distant room, she caught a view of Armida's figure: she hurried forward, and Armida advanced to meet her: she was magnificently dressed, and there was an air of triumph and splendour in her figure and expression that Rosine never remembered to have beheld, but which would have recalled the memory of her earlier days to those who had known her in Italy. Rosine was almost dazzled by this brilliant phantom bursting on her, after the

darkness of her night journey, and she paused, unable to speak or to answer, till relieved by tears. Armida expressed pleasure at seeing her, but her manner was hurried and abstracted, and she had stopped in the midst of the shortest sentences as if she had forgot their meaning. At length she said with a smile that Rosine thought far from her heart, "You must not weep, Rosine; remember this is a bridal festival."

"I fear," said Rosine, trying to recover her spirits, "I fear I shall disgrace you in this homely dress: I am unfit to be the attendant of so splendid a bride."

Armida cast her eyes for a moment on Rosine, and then on her own gorgeous dress; the contrast between their feelings, and their external appearance, seemed to strike her with agonizing force; she turned away, and the expression of her countenance for a moment reminded Rosine of the time when the haughty and brilliant Armida knew no one on earth

who could equal her splendour, or rival her talents, or resist her power.

She continued to walk up and down the room with a hurried step. Rosine often attempted to speak, but her voice failed her, till at length, unable to bear the oppression of her heart, she ventured to inquire the reason of this precipitate marriage.

"You do not know it yet," said Armida, suddenly stopping and viewing her intently.

Rosine declared her ignorance even of the event itself till she was summoned to witness it.

"You will know it too soon perhaps," said Armida, after a long pause: "till then spare yourself and me all inquiries."

As she continued to walk, her figure reflected in a mirror caught her eye for a moment, and snatching a light that burned on the table, she stood before Rosine: "Am I not a brilliant figure?" said she.

"You are indeed," said Rosine; "but do not look at me so intently, Armida: I cannot bear the brightness of your eyes, and there is something in their expression that alarms me."

"Yes," said Armida, "the world might wonder at such a sacrifice, but they know not for whom it is made."

"Dear Armida," said Rosine, "why do you call your marriage a sacrifice, and if it does not contribute to happiness (as I guess too well) why is it made?"

"Yes, yes," said Armida, "it will contribute to my peace effectually, beyond all human expedients, or human power to disturb."

"I do not understand you," said Rosine; and sick with unspeakable fears, she turned to the window she was sitting at, and opening it, gasped for breath. Armida approached the window. The night was calm and beautiful, the clouds were dispersed, and every star in heaven burned with clear and steady lustre.

“How this solemn light changes every object!” said Rosine: “how different you appear to me from what you did but a few moments past! your glittering dress has grown dim, and you look deadly pale;” for she could not believe that feeling could produce so total a change as Armida’s countenance betrayed while she looked at her.

“Rosine,” said Armida, suddenly and solemnly interrupting her, “you are religious; you are conversant with those solemn things that have been only matter of curiosity, of vague speculation to me. Have you ever discovered what was the fate of those beings whom misfortune has made weary of life—who——” and she stopped, unable to find words that could convey her meaning without terrifying her companion.

“Ah!” said Rosine, eagerly catching at the sound of religion, “the truths I have been taught have convinced me that they alone afford a shelter from the

evils of life : that they alone give a peace which the world cannot give, and the world cannot take away."

"Rosine, you have been nursed in religion, and you turn to it from nature and from habit : to you it is like the return of a wanderer to his father's house, but to me, who was taught every thing but that, it is like the arrival of a stranger in a place where he is disowned and unwelcome : every thing looks dark and cold to me."

Rosine, with the eloquence of affection, and the energy of devotion, interrupted her, and she painted the blessedness of the spirit that reposes its cares and its struggles in the bosom of eternal peace, and sees the waves of a stormy world burst at its feet.

"I have read much like this," said Armida, "but can you answer my question—can you tell the fate of departed spirits—do they wander in darkness, or do they obtain a glimpse of the object

whom they loved more than life, and for whom life itself was renounced?"

"Darkness rests upon every question that does not belong to our peace," said Rosine.

"Then let us have no more of it," said Armida, wearily: "and why," she added, "why harass ourselves and our fellow-creatures with questions that a few moments must solve to them and us." She turned away as she spoke.

"A few moments!" repeated Rosine, following her; "how can a few moments disclose what life is unable to inform us? We must wait with faith and patience for these discoveries."

"There is perhaps another way of arriving at them," said Armida, thoughtfully.

"It is eternity alone can inform us," said Rosine.

"It is on eternity I will call to tell me," replied Armida.

Her dreadful meaning burst on Rosine in that moment: she stood at first gasping with horror, and then attempted to rush from the room.

"Where are you going?" said Armida, detaining her.

"To alarm the castle—to call for assistance. Armida, do not struggle with me: neither your talents nor your passions can awe me now—no eloquence or sophistry can persuade me that a crime is not a crime, and that the one you are meditating is not the worst of all. Frantic woman! was your lover then your god?"

"Be calm, Rosine; I promise you I will not seek the means of death to-night."

Rosine looked doubtfully at her, but she had no other resource but to believe her: a long silence followed, and the conversation was resumed so faintly, and with such long intervals, that Rosine ex-

erted herself in vain against the depression that invaded all her faculties.

"You are exhausted," said Armida, looking at her with compassion: "will you take some refreshment, or will you throw yourself on that sofa, and take some repose?"

"No, no; it is late, but I feel no weariness—I will sit up with you—I have often sat up later without fatigue—do you remember when I watched you in the ruined abbey?"

"Yes, but let us talk not of misfortunes now: the evil is past; let this night hear only the sounds of joy," said Armida with frantic irony.

Rosine now resorted to any topic to avoid the oppressive silence that followed. "When is this marriage to take place?" said she.

"At midnight the priest is expected," said Armida, "and till then, Rosine, I wish to be a few moments alone—I have

need of some moments of reflexion to compose my mind."

"May they restore your peace," said Rosine, retiring: "I will pass the time in praying for it."

"I thank you," said Armida, when she found herself alone, "but I fear heaven will not hear it." She passed with rapid steps into her cabinet, the apartment where Connal and she had met the second time she ever beheld him. She looked round her: a fiery mist seemed to overspread every object, and a breeze every moment rung in her ears: she paused, and leaned against the door to support herself; she tried to collect her thoughts; she felt her pride revolt against the last moments of her life being thus lost in the obscurity of fear, and she repeatedly touched the objects near her to restore herself to recollection: but these objects, the memorials of her former existence, by reminding her of it at this moment, almost destroyed her resolution: she

looked round, and wondered at her own desolation, and at the misfortunes that had driven her to end by violence a life that might have been so distinguished. Her paintings, by the brilliancy of their colours, seemed to contrast the fate of their author: a veil that had been accidentally thrown over her harp she attempted with shuddering hands to remove, but the melancholy murmur that whispered from the strings overcame her.

“The next hand that touches ye,” she thought, “will not perhaps possess the skill of mine, but it will not, like mine, be disabled by grief.”

Some books lay on the table; she turned them over rapidly, with a hurried consciousness that it was for the last time. A Virgil lay open at the ominous passage in the fourth book: “*Vixi, et quem dederat cursum fortuna, peregi et nunc magna mei sub terris ibit Imago felix, heu nimium felix.*”

“This is kind,” she repeated, as her

eye fell on the lines : " how many warning spirits gather round me, like the breezes of evening whispering in the ear of the hastening traveller."

On the table lay also some of the rich ornaments she had taken out that evening : she gazed on them for some time.

" Brilliant toys ! how vainly ye sparkle in the eyes of death : never will ye sparkle on a breast that beat more strongly with the ambition of genius, or the enthusiasm of passion. How often ye have adorned me for their brilliant triumphs, and you will sparkle when I am faded and cold. There is not one of these that does not commemorate some hour of different existence. This bracelet my poor father gave me the first night I sung in public ; how proud he was then, and how proud was I. This armlet I drew the design for myself, and the artist admired my taste ; I wore it the night of the fête at Naples, the last scene of that splendid existence that was to close

so soon. Alas ! is not all pomp designed only to contrast the gloom of death : does it not reproach us with that lustre it gives to cheeks that must soon be pale, and eyes that are hastening to close while they view it ?”

These objects of art wearied her by their opposition to nature and passion, whose resources she had been compelled to explore so deeply. Her heart in this last hour turned to those grand and expansive views that awaken in the parting soul a consciousness of immortal energy, and are assimilated to its profoundest emotions. She gazed on the night, and the host of heaven ; and the breeze entering through the window, as it swept the strings of her harp, awoke those indefinite tones that accorded with the deep and mingled agitations of her soul, and whispered that harmony of death that the dying can only feel, and the living seek in vain.

The last thoughts of Armida.

“How beautiful is the night! nature arrays herself in splendour to meet the last gaze of her votaries, but it is that melancholy splendour so congenial to her fate. Bright and blessed lights, your lustre first shone on me in my darling Italy; there I was taught your names and numbers, but did I ever think that the last time I was to behold you was with eyes that were to be closed with my own hand.”

* * * * *

“Many will wonder at my fate; they will say that I was distinguished by nature and fortune, that life had still enough to bestow, had I patience to wait for it, and that I escaped only to avoid imaginary misfortune: they are mistaken. I never was conscious of happiness till I loved, and to those who love as I did, fate presents but one alternative,

either to live for the object, or die for him. The latter was mine ; it was certainly the severer of the two, but it was the more honourable."

* * * * *

"Connal, though the virtues of my heart never equalled your's, though in my best days I never was worthy of you, and compared to you was only like a meteor to the sun, yet surely this last sacrifice has removed the difference between us, and when life is thrown into the scale, the balance trembles. What has religion itself more to give : self-immolation is the last effort of a created being ; we cannot make, but we can destroy : our power is universally limited to the infliction of pain, but sufferings make a victim more acceptable."

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"My figure is not yet faded, or my mind impaired : I am jealous of these advantages that make me more worthy of him : I would not be otherwise than I

am. The world will pity me, because the world knows not what it is to love."

* * * * *

"I still wish he had beheld me in my days of early brilliancy: this is not the wish of vanity: passion can be at once selfish and disinterested. I would have concentrated the lustre of my powers to shine on him; I would—but it is time to have done with the thoughts that wander back to life."

* * * * *

"Connal, it was here I first beheld you, and there is not a soul whom the poets imagine doomed to wander through the melancholy elysium of lovers that better knows its mazes than I do every spot where we met, and gazed, and parted. The soul concentrates its sinking fires to illuminate those objects; how mournful, yet how penetrating is their light; the twilight of the soul when the sun of life has gone down."

* * * * *

"Connal, no pomp will attend your

fate; no monument will rise over your dust: the only heart that feels for you will be cold, the only eyes that weep for you will be closed; but your spirit will not disdain this epitaph—Armida died for him.”

* * * * *

“Of all our talents the passion for music is said to remain the longest. The wife of Roland was said to have passed the night before her execution at the instrument, but the tones she produced were so wild, frightful, and distracted, that the prisoners trembled to hear her. It is not so with me: perhaps what we have been most distinguished by in life becomes most painful to us when we are quitting it. I cannot touch the harp; it is so long since he heard it, that the sound would awake no association: yet one chord more: it was the last; with what applause was the first heard, but silence and death are the only witnesses of its last vibration.”

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“The clock strikes twelve; my equivocal promise to Rosine has now been kept: I have not sought the means of death to-night; could she believe then I would live.

“The morning of that day, whose end I shall never see, has commenced; I shall never see another sun: how we cling to the last object we are to behold, though we have beheld it with indifference a thousand times. What will be the next light I must behold, or shall I wander through darkness; shall I follow him dimly through mist and shadow, and ask him for a mortal song—imagination is weary in the pursuit of future existence.

“It remains not to think, but to act: why do I linger on this last page; can a sentiment of pride mingle with the deeper feelings of this hour; can I regret that oblivion must shroud the last traces of my existence.”

* * * * *

She rose, and went to a small apart-

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ment that adjoined the cabinet. Lord Montclare in his life-time had communicated to Armida the medical knowledge which he possessed in no common degree: among other extraordinary pursuits he had accustomed himself to the composition of poisons, and he had extracted one that after lingering in the frame for eight and forty hours, had the power of dismissing life without a struggle or a pang. He deposited this in a closet, and told her where it was to be found: she remembered it well: it was in the very spot he had mentioned. She took it: it was a small vial with a pale liquor. She sat down with it in her hand, and remained for some moments in a state of stupefaction. It was in vain she attempted to collect her thoughts; the last struggle had exhausted her heart, and though she gazed round the room with a quick and sparkling eye, she beheld only vacancy: suddenly a step approached: she started up, and afraid of an intruder,

swallowed it in a moment. The consciousness that her fate was now decided restored her resolution. The blood returning to her cheek flushed it almost with a sparkling crimson; her eyes shone with unusual light, and an awful and indefinite joy wandered through her heart. She was now in a state that had in one moment reduced the tyrants of her fate to the impotency of worms: the power of the whole earth could not compel her to suffer another pang, and the grandeur of this self-liberation supported her pride against its terrors. Rosine re-entered the room to tell her she was summoned to the chapel: she was astonished at the sudden and supernatural dignity of her figure, her silence, and the firm step with which she quitted the apartment.

Lady Montclare, Desmond, and the priest, were waiting for them. The chapel was dimly lit, and the faces, pale with different emotions, looked almost sepulchral in each others eyes: there

was a long pause, till Lady Montclare whispered some words to Desmond, who was leaning dejectedly against the railing of the altar: he started, and advancing, offered his hand to Armida. The priest opened the book, and even at that moment Rosine could not believe they were to be united, and she looked round in fixed and visionary expectation of some interruption. The ceremony begun: a shriek that seemed to pierce their ears rung through the chapel: they started, and the priest stopped: it was followed by a few notes so wild, so plaintive, so unearthly, that it seemed the song of a maniac or a spirit.

Desmond dropt the hand of Armida, and, his eyes dilated with horror, gazed in the direction from which that well known voice seemed to come. The chapel door slowly opened, and a figure, so fair, so faint, so transparent, it seemed the embodied spirit of the breeze appeared at it. Lady Montclare rushed

forward, but she was too slow for the aërial flight of the figure, who, passing her, glided up to the altar, and gazed around he

“Merciful heaven! Ines!”

It was indeed the unfortunate Ines who had been snatched from a watry grave, and borne away by her mother's agents to the castle on the night their retreat was invaded, and while Desmond, who had lost his senses on seeing her plunge into the river, was alike unable to defend, and unconscious where she was conveyed.

Almost immediately on her arrival at the castle she was delivered of a dead child, and her sufferings operating on her situation, deranged her irrecoverably, though care preserved her life. Her mother, finding her unable to act in subservience to her plans, had confined and watched her with such strictness that the secret of her residence at the castle never had transpired, till this night, when Lady

Montclare, occupied in the consummation of her plans, and her attendant careless from fatigue, she stole from her apartment, and wandered to the chapel.

"Oh, heaven! oh, merciful heaven! and is it thus I have lost, and thus I have at last found you!" cried Desmond, sinking on the earth beside her. "Oh! better you had perished than live to give me this intolerable agony by your sight."

"I do not know you," said Ines, gazing on him: "I do not know you; yet your's are the first eyes I have seen this long, long time that beheld me with compassion."

"Compassion!—Oh! that this sight could dry them up, that they had been torn out of their sockets before they beheld you thus!—and do you not know me, Ines?"

"Ines," said Lady Montclare, in a tone of authority she had assumed over the unhappy maniac, "Ines, how did you wander here?"

"To dig a grave for him," cried Ines, "a

grave for my unborn babe.—You would not let me see him alive ; but I will steal out at night, and tear up a grave with these hands, and then I shall see him in his shroud and in death ; he will smile like his father. Oh, I have wandered far and near, day and night, and I have followed every gleam of the moon, for by moonlight I see best ; but no where can I find one green sod to cover him : every thing is withered, every thing I see is dry and burnt up, and when his father comes to his grave he will not know it :—but where shall I find his father ?”

“ Here ! here !—he is here !” cried the wretched Desmond, almost crushing her to his wasted heart.

“ I do not know you,” exclaimed Ines ; and tearing herself from his arms, she imagined she saw the corse of her child, and beating the ground with her hands, she shrieked—“ Dead eyes, dead eyes, will you not look at me ? Will you not reach to me your cold hands ? You are mine :

I bore you, though they told me I was not a mother. Ah! I know I am a parent, though I never saw my infant, for I was deserted both by husband and child, and left to strangers that bind me down in darkness, and sear my brain with burning irons when I complain."

"Monster! and this is your work!" cried Desmond turning from her, and darting an annihilating look at her mother: "and you knew she was alive, and you would have wedded me to her sister. What mystery of hell is this!—You told me it was to save Connal's life. Speak, wretch! speak! or I shall forget your sex, and do some vengeance on you as horrible as your crimes."

"I told you the truth," said Lady Montclare, firm in falsehood: "I thought your union was annulled by her derangement; and her life is so precarious, of so little consequence ——"

"Hush, hush," cried Desmond; "dare not to measure her days: she shall not die!—she will know me again: will you

not, Ines, will you not know me again, your Desmond, the father of your babe : we will search for it together—will we not, Ines ?”

“ Be calm, be calm,” said Rosine, who knelt on the ground to support the exhausted maniac.

“ I will, I will,” cried Desmond, grasping her hand : “ I will not utter a word : I will sit here and watch her.—Ines, oh ! God ! her eyes look wilder :—she will never, never know me again. I cannot bear to look at her,” he exclaimed, starting away : “ only tell me when her eyes look calmer.”

Ines, released from his hold, rose feebly : she wandered about for some time, and her mother, defeated and terrified, did not dare to impede her. At length Armida's figure caught her eye, and she eagerly but timidly approached her.

Armida already felt the chill of death in her veins ; but nature still asserted its claims in her heart, and as the poor ma-

niac, half in adoration, and half in weakness, sunk before her, she fell on her neck, and wept even to agony. Ines gazed on her wildly.

“ I know you,” she said, “ I know you : but I cannot tell your name. I have forgot every thing but misfortune. — You were unhappy too. I remember your stately love : — they said he was a prince : — on earth there was none like him but my own ; but mine was fairer, fresher, softer. I wooed a flower, and died of its fragrance : you clung to an oak ; but the lightning struck it, and it crushed you in its fall. We were both ill-fated ; but we will go to some world where no false lover shall come, and be happy, when I have found my babe.”

Armida, deluged with tears, had no power to answer.

“ How glorious you are,” cried Ines, still gazing on her ; “ and yet you weep with all those gems sparkling round you. Once I saw you on the shore, while I was

wandering alone: your lover was there with all his train: a sad and shadowy band, that gathered round their chief like a storm; yet you followed him through mist and darkness:—did you not follow him?"

"I did, I did," cried Armida.

"Yes;" I saw you rise into the air: you sought some isle of light in the western sky, where you were to reign together. I saw you ascend in pomp: I heard the blast of unearthly music: I saw your parting smile of light. You went upward with trump, and harp, and horn:—I wept to follow you; but darkness closed on me, and I was left alone.—Armida!" she cried with supernatural energy, "if you find my babe in the world of brightness where you dwell, tell him his mother weeps for him still, and every night when the moon rises, her heart seems to burst from her bosom, and prostrate itself before the throne of God to ask for him." Armida

staggering with horror, fell into the arms of Rosine. When she recovered, she found herself in her apartment again. All thoughts of this dreadful marriage were over. Rosine was kneeling beside her: she started up, and reflected with despair that life had been sacrificed in vain, for she had been impelled to believe that Connal's life depended on her immediate union with Desmond.

"I am sick of crimes and horrors," she cried when her recollection awoke: "it was vain to bid me live: it is better to be no more, and cease to witness them, even though death only enables me to escape from it myself."

She now remembered the promise she had extorted from Connal, to see her for a few moments on that night, and from Lady Montclare that he should be admitted; yet, after the late scene that had developed a degree of selfish wickedness in her mother that was scarce credible, she doubted whether her promise would

be kept, and she implored Rosine to watch for him at the passage by the rocky terrace where he was to be admitted to her apartment, while she tried to collect her thoughts for this last meeting.

Connal had wandered about the castle from the moment the night shut in. He bore the load of life for a few hours still, for Armida had promised that night to disclose the motive that impelled her to a marriage with Desmond. As he lingered like a spectre beneath the walls, Wandesford, returning from a party with whom he had dined, rode past him. The forbearance of Connal was past: he had shaken hands with life, and he knew from many inexpressible warnings that his last hour was near. He instantly pursued Wandesford, and, seizing his bridle, ordered him in a tone that would not be disobeyed to dismount and listen to him. His servants had rode on towards his quarters, and he had no means of resistance. He recognised Connal, and his

proud spirit did not shrink from the encounter.

“Wandesford,” said Connal, with the calmness of a desperate man, “I have a few words to say, and you must listen to me. Whenever we have met, fortune has made a difference between us that rendered you a tyrant, and me your victim. You have had rank, power, and lawful authority on your side, and how you have used it I need not remind you. Enjoy its remembrance as you can, for its last term has arrived: this accidental meeting has removed the difference: we are now as nature made us.—It is midnight, we are alone, and before we part we must try to which of us nature will allot the victory in a personal struggle.”

“Villain!” said the haughty Wandesford, “do you know whom you speak to?”

“Villain! I retort the name,” said Connal: “I know you well: your gashes are in my flesh: your crimes are deeper in

my heart. Hear me, Colonel Wandesford, for I will mock you with your titles ; I am almost famished ; I am quite heart-broken : I have not tasted food for forty-eight hours. These rags are sticking to me only with the congealed blood your stripes have made. Yet, even thus, I do not shrink from challenging you to a fair and equal contest. I never shrunk from you when the thunder of your artillery stunned my ears : I did not shrink when your lashes penetrated almost to the bone, and you laid your cane in the bloody tracks to point to your men where the next were to be laid :—but I was tied then, and you were safe : I do not shrink now.—Colonel Wandesford, take your ground.”

“ And has my compassion spared you to threaten my life ? ” said Wandesford.

“ Your compassion ! ” re-echoed Connal in a voice of thunder : “ monster !—such another word, and these half-starved arms will tear you piecemeal. If you

wish to die the death of a man, throw me one of your pistols, and take your ground."

The proud spirit of Wandesford flushed in his face.

"It shall never be said," he cried, "that I shrunk from chastising a wretch whom his crimes had already degraded to the level of the most ignominious punishment."

His pistols were loaded: he gave one of them to Connal; but, trembling with rage and hatred, he discharged his own instantly.—It missed the aim; but Connal's was surer: the ball passed through Wandesford's heart.—He fell. Connal rushed forward to support his dying foe. With the blood that flowed from his mortal wound his enmity flowed away too. The man whom of all others he had hated and injured was the only one to support his convulsed frame, and hear his parting groan. A corroded

mind, delirious passions, an ulcerated heart, and a damning conscience, were the fearful companions of his dying moments. After a struggle more bitter than death, the proud Wandesford said feebly—
“ O’Morven, you are an injured man. I hated you for your virtues : I hated you for your country : I hated you for her whom we both loved. I have no expiation to make but this confession.”

“ It is enough, Wandesford : I am too near death myself to be at enmity with man.”

“ And can you then forgive me, for you have had much wrong ?”

“ Can I hope to be myself forgiven except on this condition ?”

“ O’Morven, your dying enemy blesses you,” said Wandesford, struggling to rise from the bloody ground. It was too late.

Connal bowed to raise him ; but he saw the swimming eye, the livid dew, the

distorted feature of death, and his passions were extinguished by the sight. He bent close to the dying man, that he might whisper peace to his spirit; but his ear was cold.

“He is no more,” said Connal; “and with him die my last human feelings.—I am fit to meet her now, for I am beyond resentment for ever.”

He turned to the castle.

“Surely,” said he, “the night is darkened by the horrors it has witnessed, or my senses fail me, for I scarce can distinguish my way. No lights burn in the castle: nothing shines on me from heaven or earth: the stars are gone out: there is a terror in this darkness more than darkness can bring. Surely my last hour approaches: the shadows are lengthening, and the traveller is warned of the end of his journey.”

Rosine led Connal to Armida's apartment: neither of them spoke, and she retired, unable to witness their meeting.

There was a strange contrast between Armida, seated alone in this midnight and disastrous pomp, her cheek burning, and her expression exalted by the effect of the poison, and Connal, who, pale, bloody, and haggard, stood at a distance gazing on her resplendent figure, that seemed to him like the radiance of the apostate since his fall. The contrast was heightened by a long and mutual silence.

"Why do you gaze on me?" said Armida, forcing him to speak, that she might assure herself it was not a spectre she saw.

"I know not why," said Connal; "for I can scarce believe the eyes I see you with, Armida. And have I lost you, whom neither danger or distress could drive from my ruined side? What error of head, or wandering of heart misled you? Armida, we loved so well, that your desertion, undone as I am, was almost a crime."

"Go on," said Armida, scarce able to

repress her fearful triumph, "go on, I am prepared to hear reproaches."

"I cannot utter them," said Connal, "my heart is too heavy. And why did you assume that splendour to insult a wretch whose eyes have never gazed but on misery since we parted?"

"I wore it that you might see for the last time what I have been. Connal, this is our last moment, and let us pass it like lovers: let no reproach, no resentment disturb it. We have loved as none ever loved, in grief and in danger, and we will part as none have parted, in triumph."

"Yes," said Connal, sternly, "such triumph as these wounds, this broken heart can afford you."

"Hush! hush!" cried Armida, suddenly rising, and approaching him with aërial and frantic animation, "not a murmur more. Let these last moments combine all that we have sought in vain through life—a sentiment of joy that nothing can disturb, but nothing can re-

store. My imagination is gone," said she, pausing: "not a ray of mind will light our parting hour; but the passions of a devoted heart will make vast amends. What thoughts will be ours! what recollections! what rich and burning tears! Heaven, that denied us the luxury of happiness, gave us the luxury of grief, and left us nothing to complain."

"Armida, is this mockery, or is it delirium?"

"Connal," said Armida, impetuously, "you must yield to my feelings: I have a right to be obeyed, for the purchase was great. Listen to my voice—you hear its last accents: these eyes gaze on you for the last time, and they have not lost all their power; and this form that once delighted you will not inspire you with horror at its last view. How blessed thus to blend the luxury of the senses with that of the heart, and remove from death the frown that conceals the visage of a friend. I did not wither away be-

fore you: my colours are yet glowing, though the storm of death is near. Think, oh, think with me some thought unutterably fond—think of a happy moment we have passed together, if ever we passed a moment of unbroken happiness—think even of some moment of grief, when our hearts met and melted together, and in the eye of heaven and of each other we were one—think of such a moment, and let your heart dissolve in its recollection.”

“It does, it does,” cried Connal, subdued by the eloquence of passion.

“And you weep, and those are tears of passion.”

“No other tears ever fell from these eyes.”

“Blessed dew!” cried Armida, sinking before him in enthusiasm, “fall on me, and embalm me: if there be a heaven for lovers, surely we shall be among the brightest there—the spirits of all who have loved greatly and unfortunately will

attend our triumph, when we arrive above. Armida and Connal, names so unhappy on earth, will yet be bright in paradise, and the pride of my heart will yet meet its triumph in the eternal enjoyment of that passion with which it struggled so long, and to which it was at last sacrificed."

Connal raised her in his arms.

"Armida," he said solemnly, "I came here not to weep, but to inquire. Armida, tell me the motive of your marriage with Desmond."

"Not yet, not yet," said Armida; "you will know too soon, and yet you will know too late."

"I have not strength to penetrate these mysteries, and I have not time. It is past midnight, and before the morning breaks I feel the traveller will be far on his last journey. Armida, tell me the motive of your marriage with Desmond."

Armida was silent. Connal bore her

in his arms to the casement: he pointed to the stars that had emerged in full glory from the passing clouds.

“No being ever yet shrunk from the truth under such an appeal: by those bright lights of heaven I adjure you, and will you not tell me the truth?”

Armida wished that he should witness her last moments, but she felt it was impossible to delay the explanation longer.

“Connal, have I not wandered? Have I not suffered with you? Have I not loved you as never woman loved? Have I not followed you with a constancy passing that of woman?”

“You have. You have been to me what no words can utter.”

“Was there another proof in human power to give of my devotion to you?”

“None.”

“Yes, there was one more—to die for you.”

“For me!”

"Ah! what other motive could she, who loved as I did, have for resigning you, and uniting myself to another?"

"What mystery is this—your life, and my safety! What connexion could there be between them, severed as we are?"

"Ask Wandesford that," said Armida, speaking with difficulty.

"It is too late," said Connal, "to ask Wandesford: he is gone to answer at another tribunal: he fell by my hand to-night. Armida, how pale you grow. What change is this? You tremble, yet your hands burn; and those eyes—— Armida, speak to me."

"Connal, tell me truly, is Wandesford no more?"

"Wandesford is no more."

"Oh!" she cried, with a scream of horror, "we have been the victims of unexampled treachery."

"Armida, while I have breath to ask you, tell me what is the cause of the horror you express at the fate of Wan-

desford? Was Wandesford or Desmond then your choice, or was it all the mockery of fiends?"

"I fear it was, Connal; I cannot imagine, I cannot speak. Oh, Connal! my mother made me believe you were Wandesford's prisoner, and that he would spare your life solely on the condition—I cannot breathe."

"Go on, go on," cried the frantic Connal.

"On the condition that I should become the wife of Desmond. Desmond was told the same. I believed it, I trembled, I consented; but when I had secured your safety as I hoped, I found it impossible to live: I swallowed poison—it is now working in my veins. For you I would have wedded, for you I am expiring, and in vain."

"I never was Wandesford's prisoner: I would not have bought an existence for ages by the sacrifice of one moment of your's. I would have died, ten thousand

deaths I would have died, and you closed your heart and your ears against all explanation : when I knelt to you to tell me the motive of this fatal marriage, you referred me to this night. Ah ! had you spoken."

" I dreaded my resolution : I saw but one object before me—you in the power of Wandèsford. I determined to save, but never to survive the sacrifice."

She sunk on the ground beside him, as he knelt: not a word was heard, not a tear was shed. Their locked and frozen hearts forgot feeling and pulsation, and death seemed already to have invaded the cold arms in which they clasped each other.

* * * * *

The dead silence that pervaded the castle was broke by the trampling of horses, the clash of arms, and the clamour of soldiers. The party who had been out several days in pursuit of Connal had at length traced him to the castle :

Lady Montclare now as anxious for his life, since all hopes of the union of Desmond and Armida were over, as she had been for his ruin, opposed their entrance in vain.

He was torn from the convulsed but senseless grasp of Armida, and conducted to the quarters of the commanding officer, since Wandesford's death, to take his trial for rebellion, by military law.

It was noon when Armida, on whom the poison had not yet operated with mortal force, was restored to recollection. The intenseness of her sufferings awoke every faculty at once: she remembered distinctly every event of the preceding night, and determined in a moment to follow him to the extremity of his fate. Rosine did not dare to oppose her: her resolution, silently taken, but perfectly understood, admitted of no opposition: but as she was tearing off the ornaments that still glittered round her corse-like figure, to begin her last journey, her wretched

mother stood before her. Armida, with a smile of angel forbearance, waved her hand to her to retire. Lady Montclare fell on her knees before her immolated child, to implore her to forbear this last public exposure of her feelings.

"Mother," said Armida, "God forgive you! go and restore Ines to her reason if you can, I am beyond your care."

When she reached the hall, she saw the carriage prepared, and the servants waiting to attend her; she dismissed them.

"This pomp does not suit me now," said she: "the bride of a rebel must seek him on foot, yet I am prouder this moment than if I were ascending a throne. Rosine, you will not desert me, it is my last journey, and exhausted friendship will not shrink from its final task."

"I have never shrunk," said the weeping Rosine: "spare me but words, and I will follow you while my strength supports me."

It was late when they reached the town where Connal was confined. Armida's person was unknown as she passed through the streets, but the dignity of her figure, her flushed cheek, and her dishevelled hair, which had escaped from the band, and streamed on her shoulders, struck every passenger, and all that saw her conceived at once that her arrival was connected with the fate of Connal. This impression facilitated the inquiries Rosine made for him, and she was informed that he was on his trial at that moment, at the barracks, at a mile's distance. Thither the wanderers followed him: some of the poorer inhabitants pursued them, to gaze on Armida, whose beauty, though alternately flushed with emotion, and pale with the approach of death, was beyond all they had ever imagined. Some of them wondered in silence, but some of them prayed aloud for her success, though they knew not the cause in which she was engaged.

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Armida heard them : she had no voice for thanks, but she eagerly scattered the contents of her purse among them, for she felt how much at this moment she needed the compassion of the meanest of her species. They loaded her with blessings, but shuddering at the name of happiness with which their prayers were filled, she hurried on. They entered on a heath where temporary barracks for the additional troops had been erected, and here Armida felt her strength begin to fail : she tottered to a shed where some of the soldiers' wives resided, and when she was admitted sunk upon a seat: Rosine bending over her, almost wished for the termination of her sufferings, even on this desolate and deserted spot. Some of the women who came from the barracks, unconscious of Armida's interest in the subject of their conversation, began to speak of the prisoner: Armida shivered, but she did not utter a word : some declared he would be pardoned

others spoke of his being ordered to immediate execution, but all concurred in compassion for the young officer who had followed him to prison, and now stood by his side, while he was on his trial. There was an old clergyman there too, they said, who wept like a child.

Connal had not been deserted: Desmond, careless of his danger, and St. Austin, in spite of his age and profession, had followed the rebel to his trial. In the few hours he was in confinement Connal exhausted every topic of persuasion to induce Desmond to consult his safety by concealing himself; but Desmond, whose heart was formed for affection, and who was at once deprived of every object of it, without father, brother, wife or child, and reduced to wish for the death of Ines under her present hopeless misery, listened with impatience to the mention of life.

“In early youth,” said he, “I look

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all over life; I see it is a desert; I turn for shelter to the grave."

And the court with deep compassion saw a young officer who had fought for his country, overcome by fraternal affection, and domestic misfortune, stand by the side of a convicted rebel, and call upon the justice of his country for a similar sentence.

It was evening, when two women rushing into the shed announced that the prisoner was acquitted; a few minutes after they were followed by a third, who, overcome by what she had heard or seen, sat down weeping bitterly: at that sound Armida attempted to raise her stiffened limbs, and quit the shed, and the women then first perceiving the cause of her distress, gathered round her with expressions of pity:

"God bless you! God bless you!" said Armida, trying to break from them, "surely it is a feeling world I am leaving,

but I know it too late!" and habitually generous, she was about to divide her purse among them, but her recent bounty had exhausted it: she recollected that some of the rich ornaments she had worn the preceding night were still on her person, and in this extremity of her fate, grateful even for menial pity, the proud daughter of Lord Montclare was seen dividing in a shed among female peasants the ornaments in which she had glittered in the view of princes.

They set out again, it was almost twilight, but they distinguished a number of figures at a distance on the heath.

"He is pardoned!" shrieked Armida, darting forward, "he is pardoned!" but Rosine knew too well the fatal roll of the drums, she saw too well the circle that was forming among the distant figures: she rushed before Armida, and with all her strength attempted to turn her from the sight. It was too late—the roar of the musketry thundered over the heath, and

announced that Connal had met at least with the fate of the brave. At the moment the soldiers drew their triggers, a young man, bursting through the ranks, threw himself on his knees beside Connal: the impulse was so rapid that no one could prevent it: the soldiers fired, and Desmond fell beside Connal.

St. Austin implored the commanding officer to compel the soldiers and the crowd to retire, and leave the bodies to the care of some surviving friend: the officer was a man of humanity, and he complied. St. Austin stood by the corpses till he saw with horror Armida and Rosine approach. Armida knelt on the ground: a single glance distinguished the brothers. Connal lay calm as if in sleep; Desmond's more impetuous spirit had left an expression of defiance in the features that were stern in the fixedness of death.

"Noblest of men! here we are at length united!" cried Armida, sinking

on the earth, and raising his head on her knees : " we are at length united, and I am worthy to be your bride : on the damp and bloody ground, with the corse of a rebel in my arms, I would not resign my place for empires : here is my last seat, and here I am more exalted than when I received the homage of a false world ! "

Rosine and St. Austin stood at a distance : they did not interrupt this solemn scene, but by their audible and agonizing sobs.

Suddenly the noise of a carriage was heard approaching, and Lady Montclare springing from her splendid equipage knelt on the earth beside her daughter, and implored with maternal tenderness, felt too late, to return with her and be reconciled to life. It was then St. Austin felt it his duty to approach, and admonish the criminal, and console the sufferer : it was too late. Lady Montclare in the despair of sudden repentance was insensible to

every thing but the sight of her sacrificed daughter; and Armida, on whom the effect of the poison had been accelerated by her mental sufferings, was no longer capable of any sensation but that she clasped the corse of Connal in her arms.

At that moment a tumult among the servants who attended Lady Montclare announced something they attempted to prevent, but could not: it was Ines. Since her last view of Desmond she had become so intractable that nothing but the presence of her mother could restrain her, and compelled to quit the castle in search of Armida, she had been unable to leave Ines behind her. The moment her mother quitted the carriage she attempted to follow her: her screams and struggles terrified the servants into submission, and rushing forward she discovered the corse of Desmond before it was possible to prevent her flying to it, and clasping it with a force no mortal hand could sever.

The wretched mother at the same moment saw both her children in the arms of death, clinging to the remains of the chosen of their hearts : Armida was silent, but Ines raved with the piercing eloquence of madness.

“ Here the wanderer rests ! ” she cried : “ see how calm he lies, he speaks to me though you cannot hear his voice ; but the world cannot persuade me that those lips do not move when I speak to him.

“ Can this be death ! oh, how the fools who dread it are deceived : never was life so lovely ! Is he indeed dead ? Why should not the dead love ? Oh, we will be so happy in the grave, we will sit on the blue tomb-stones, and sing songs all night, and when my babe is chilled, the moon shall shine on it, and warm it, and we will make breches of the church-yard flowers ; and the skulls and bones will serve us for tokens of love, and when mothers come to visit their children’s graves, we will bid them be merry

with us. Why should not the dead love, when death is so lovely !”

Lady Montclare, unable to support this sight, desired her servants to remove Ines ; they approached, and Ines, exhausted by her ravings, sunk into their arms ; but as they bore her to the carriage, a shriek, such as never come from human lips but in the agonies of death, announced that her sufferings had ceased.

Rosine and St. Austin continued to watch by Armida, though the night had shut in : she never uttered a word, she never heaved a sigh ; her glazed eye expressed no consciousness, and the firmness with which her arms were wreathed round the neck of Connal seemed rather the result of some mechanical cause, than the movement of a voluntary agent. It was midnight, when by accident a musket-shot was discharged at some distance : the flash on the night, the echo on the heath, by awaking the image of Connal’s fate,

restored her faculties for a moment: that accident operating with the crisis of the poison, she half rose from the ground: her convulsed arms released Connal from their grasp, she pressed them to her heart with a scream of agony, and expired.

St. Austin and Rosine still reside near the deserted castle, for Lady Montclare has hid her crimes and her remorse in some convent.

They often wander on the spot where the lovers rest together; they remember their virtues, their charms, and their misfortunes: life grows barren to their view while they talk of them, but the world to which they are gone brightens in the contrast.

There is an ash-tree that grows near their graves: Rosine loves to sit under its shade, and hear the evening wind murmur through its branches: the thoughts that visit her there elevate her heart, while they fill her eyes with tears; and she feels that even grief, refined by

the consciousness of futurity, is beyond all the joys of mortality. When the darkness warns her home, she casts her eye as she departs on the simple inscription placed by St. Austin on the grave of Connal.

• ΕΥΔΕΙΣ, ΑΛΛ' Ὀ ΣΕΙΟ ΛΕΛΑΣΜΕΝΟΙ ΕΣΜΕΝ.*

* Thou sleepest, but we do not forget thee.

Notes to the First Volume.

- No. 1. Vide Ledwich's Antiquities of Ireland....Page 127
 2. ——— Description of Cormac's Chapel 178
 3. The Dolphin 182

THE END.

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